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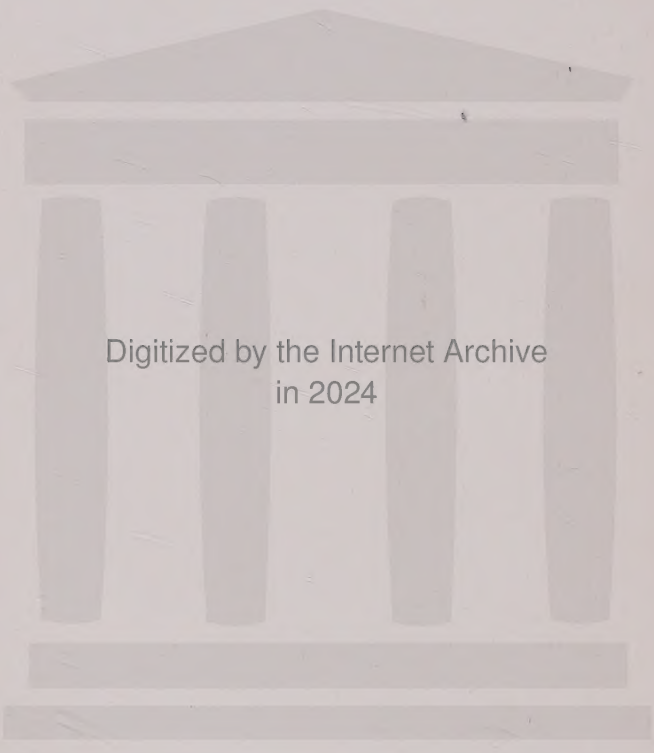

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THE

MENDELSSOHN FAMILY

VOL. II.

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy

THE

MENDELSSOHN FAMILY

(1729–1847)

FROM LETTERS AND JOURNALS

BY

SEBASTIAN HENSEL

WITH EIGHT PORTRAITS FROM DRAWINGS BY WILHELM HENSEL

SECOND REVISED EDITION

TRANSLATED BY CARL KLINGEMANN
AND
AN AMERICAN COLLABORATOR

WITH A NOTICE BY GEORGE GROVE, Esq., D.C.L.

VOL. II.

NEW YORK
HARPER & BROTHERS, FRANKLIN SQUARE
1882

54202

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VOL. II.

1835-1847.

Ich nenne den den Glücklichsten,
Der ohne Kummer der Welt Erhabenheit geschaut
Und eilig dann zurückgekehrt, von wo er kam;
Die Sonne, die allen leuchtet, Sterne, Feuer, Meer,
Der Wolken Zug—und wenn du hundert Jahre lebst,
Nichts andres siehst du, als in wenigen Jahren auch.
Erhab'neres aber schaut des Menschen Auge nie.

(MENANDER.)

. . . Him do I call the happiest,
Who free from sorrow saw the height and depth of life,
And then with speed went home to whence he came.
The sun and his great light, stars, fire and sea
And clouds—and if thou live a hundred years,
No more canst thou behold than in a few;
And nothing more sublime is seen by mortal eye

They whom the gods love die young

1836–1839.

The winter of 1835 passed drearily—everybody had to strive to get accustomed to the great loss. Felix persisted in a solitary, almost desperate mood, and Fanny was firmly convinced that he must begin quite a new life, and marry. She talked about it to him, and was overjoyed by his assurance that he would look about him on the Rhine next summer, which proved that he had a certain object in view. What else could have induced him to think of the Rhine especially? We shall see how successfully he sought and found.

A letter from Fanny to Klingemann, dated January 31, 1836, may find its place here :—

I will begin this letter to you only to make a beginning, and will continue and send it off when I can. The correspondence with you is so pleasant that it is the only one I keep up, and will not allow to be interrupted so far as I am concerned. For in correspondence, as in actual life, I like an intercourse where one may be *maussade* or lazy now and then, without the other taking offence or seeing an intention. One must be allowed even to write a letter containing nothing but 'How do you do? Answer soon.' And you must allow me to do so this time; for I really have not much more to say to-day.

February 4.—What you say about a new year and epochs in life is very true. We have now gone through one of these experiences, and, I am sure, the end of January has shown us quite a different face from the end of the year. One involuntarily feels rid of a burden in for ever laying by, so to speak, the *name* of a year, which contains so many changes. It may be prejudice or imagination, but if with the years we would

also get rid of imagination we should be parting with too much that is true and real! We have returned to music again by taking up 'St. Paul,' of which Felix left some pieces here at Christmas, which we sang yesterday with a few friends, in honour of his birthday. We are much delighted with it, and like to think of father's enjoyment of this music, for which he was indebted to the Woringen party, who sang most excellently several of the pieces, after we unfortunately had left Düsseldorf. Father took immense pleasure in it, and especially thought the sermon of St. Stephen and the following pieces perfectly original. It was remarkable, and often struck Felix as well as myself, that a person's judgment on a subject of which he had, strictly speaking, no technical knowledge could have been so acute, and even at times so indisputably correct, as father's was in music. He frequently regretted, in the latter time particularly, that no talent had been given him; but the most remarkable feature in his character, to my mind, was the harmonious development of his whole faculties, including the intellectual organs, which produced a unity of thought, feeling, and action such as we seldom see. He was in truth the centre of our circle, and we miss him sadly. A thousand small things constantly make us feel his absence, and on every occasion it strikes us how different one thing or the other would be if he were alive. My mother and sister live together, and their joint life does credit to them both, as might have been expected. The conduct, too, of my brother-in-law, Dirichlet, is beyond praise. Paul, as the head of the house, carefully superintends the affairs of the family; and I believe, if father can look down upon us now, he will not be dissatisfied with our doings. Hensel is working hard at his picture, the first sketch of which you will remember (the Israelites leaving Egypt, with Miriam leading the march). He gave me the coloured sketch on my birthday; it was the last thing that father's failing eyes allowed him to see distinctly, and he was much pleased and interested with it, and made a few remarks which Hensel has turned to good use. I think the picture will be very beautiful.

February 8.—My letter will soon reach the age of Methuselah, and I must think of finishing it. I hope you will carry

out your intention of coming to the musical festival on Whitsunday: Felix's pleasure would be as great as yours. Such a Rhenish Whitsunday might well make us forget the wretched state of so many things in Germany; but unfortunately there is hardly a chance of my enjoying the pleasure this year. To make up for it, we went to the Singakademie the other day, and were perfectly scandalised at a performance of 'Israel in Egypt.' Nobody would believe how this institution has gone down; but unhappily the public do not perceive it, for the good people of Berlin 'have faces harder than flint, and will not be ashamed.' If the conductor were to take pains, it would only be for the sake of that trifle called duty and conscience, for but few see the difference between his performances and the 'Passion' conducted by Felix. Altogether, I have now (and Hensel no less) a *dégoût* of Berlin difficult to describe; those who cannot find happiness in themselves and in their own family life are lost here; once look beyond that, and a desolate waste meets your eye in every direction—nature, politics, and art. And Prussia, too, who once aspired to the glory of marching in the van of civilisation, now follows maxims which they have begun to forget in Austria. You will have heard of the prohibition of the French papers, of the suppression of journalism to a certain extent, and of the interdict issued against the young writers. Other measures equally mad are impending. And with all this they proceed with a kind of *lâche* indulgence which neutralises the intended effect. For instance, the circulation of the papers is allowed till April 1—that is, as long as the subscriptions last; meanwhile the prohibition gets known in Paris, and they let loose their raillery, which, of course, is all read here. It is generally believed that the prohibition will never be put into execution.

A Polish Jew,[1] said to be quite a virtuoso on an instrument consisting of bundles of straw and wooden sticks, is exciting much interest here now. I should not have believed it unless Felix had written about him, but I have seen him, and can assure you that he is a very handsome man. He is a regular Jew in

[1] Gusikow. See Felix's published letter of Feb. 18, 1836.

his dress and his habits, which makes his fortune at court. I could give you a very appropriate Jewish phrase for this, only you would not understand it.

February 12.—I have heard the phenomenon, and without being ecstatic, like most people, must own that the skill of the man beats everything that I could have imagined, for with his wooden sticks resting on straw, his hammers also being of wood, he produces all that is possible with the most perfect instrument. It is a complete riddle to me how the thin sound the thing gives, something like Papageno's flute, can be produced with such materials. One of his clever tricks is putting together his instrument before the eyes of the audience; altogether, he seems to be a sly fox of the very first order. I direct your attention to this Gusikow, if he comes to London. We all agree that father would have been much interested if he could have heard him.

Minister Altenstein has been much pleased with Hensel's drawing of Mrs. Austin: he holds her in high esteem, and says that she is the only person who ever understood him. However, you do not know the man, and so can only half appreciate the fun of these words. But it is high time to conclude this letter; I ought to remember that, in London, what with the long papers and the long distances, the day is a few hours shorter than elsewhere. Pray, write something about politics in your next, for our newspapers are so insipid that one really hears less than nothing. I believe a man who has lived in London for eight years quite forgets what such a thing as our *Spiker'sche Zeitung* is like. Carabai!

Felix had finished 'St. Paul' during the winter of 1835, and the oratorio was performed for the first time at the Düsseldorf musical festival of 1836. At first only his brother Paul and his wife intended to go, but at the eleventh hour Fanny resolved to accompany them. The urgent request of the Woringens—who had an empty corner in their house, and would have thought it an infringement of the laws of hospitality to leave it unoccupied at a musical festival—the prospect of meeting Klingemann and a thousand other friends, and, above

all, the desire of being present at the first public performance of 'St. Paul,' tempted her. A joint letter of the sisters announced this intention to Klingemann.

Berlin: March 26, 1836.

Fanny.—Who are going to the festival on the Rhine? I, my mother,[1] and Paul with his wife, whom I might as well have mentioned first. Now, this is not intended as a threatening letter, like the one from Boulogne (I was seriously angry then, for I thought you would not come), but as a very genteel begging-letter, containing nothing but, 'Please, do come also!' I believe you will come if it is possible; but make it possible. There are several kinds of possibilities, amongst which I beg you to choose the one that will enable you to come to Düsseldorf. Consider everything you will consider without my reminding you, and act according to *our* best convictions. I need not tell you how I am interested in hearing the first performance of Felix's great work; the long journey I am undertaking on purpose is a sufficient proof. But I should not be leaving husband and child (at least, so I am trying to persuade myself now) only that mother, contrary to all our expectations, has decidedly declared that she wished to undertake the journey; and therefore it is perhaps better that I should go with her. Why could not father have been spared for this? You cannot imagine how fond he was of the oratorio: he would certainly have gone.

Rebecca.—I ought to be jealous, and try to dissuade you from going to the festival, as the others will have enough pleasure as it is, and you are at a still greater distance from Berlin at Düsseldorf than you are in London; but with the generosity of Scipio, I say, Go.

Being present at a Rhenish musical festival enables one to dream once more the old dream of old Germany, which the Londoner forgets in the daily turmoil, and which we, in the Berlin sands, forget in the atmosphere of criticism. Do not resist any of the joyful emotions which it cannot fail to awaken in you—firstly, because you are a man with eyes and ears, and

[1] Leah did not go after all.

next because you are Felix's friend. As for me, all I can do is to act the part of signpost, standing still with outstretched arms pointing to Düsseldorf; for whether I like it or not, I must remain here.

I cannot conscientiously invite you to come and see me, as I advise every one I wish well to—to turn their backs upon Berlin. So much the more generous would it be, if you would delight an old friend by a visit—almost as generous as she is herself in persuading you to go to the musical festival; for in reality such generosity is not at all a part of my black character. Dirichlet wishes to be remembered to you, and desires your acquaintance. Between ourselves, however, I am sure he is prejudiced against you, though he has never said so; for, with us all, you are a kind of sacred personage, against whom nobody is allowed to breathe a word. Remembering the spirit of contradiction he has in common with the rest of us, I say, Come, see, and conquer. The same spirit makes me sure that Dr. F., whom everybody praises so, must be abominable; and I shall continue to think so until I know him personally.

At Frankfort-on-the-Maine they visited Dorothea Schlegel, and were all delighted to see how well she bore her age (she was then seventy-one). From Bingen they made an excursion to the Drusenburg, 'and there I intended, dear M.,' Fanny writes, 'to give a description of your feelings, supposing I could have taken you out of my pocket then and there, and unfolded you like the panorama of the Rhine. But afterwards we went about the whole day on our own or strange donkeys' legs (do not laugh; I held out as bravely as any knight's dame of old), and in the evening I was completely tired out, and not in the mood for long descriptions. Therefore you must be content with the following short account. We went up to Prince Frederic's castle of Rheinstein, as prettily decorated a country seat as ever old robber-knight possessed, full of stained-glass windows (I wished I could have taken one home for William and Rebecca, for they are not to be had for money), old armour, goblets never used for drinking, swords never drawn, chairs never sat upon, cannon (what an anachronism!) never fired—the whole very

pretty to look at, and dreadful to live in. We also went to the Niederwald and to Johannisberg.'

From Cologne Fanny wrote a very low-spirited letter to her husband, regretting the whole journey. Since her marriage she had never travelled anywhere without him, and there, where they had spent a very interesting and pleasant time the year before, she felt the contrast very strongly. But this mood soon subsided at Düsseldorf, where the Woringens received her 'with the well-known cheerful bustle that shows you are welcome.' The same afternoon the first orchestral rehearsal of the first part of 'St. Paul' took place. 'You can fancy with what excitement I looked forward to it. The overture is very beautiful, the idea of introducing St. Paul by means of the chorale, "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme" ("Sleepers, wake, a voice is calling") is almost a stroke of wit, and exquisitely carried out. He has completely hit the organ sound in the orchestra. The choruses are sung with the greatest precision, but no solos were rehearsed yesterday. The apparition-scene sounds quite different from what I had expected, but it is so beautiful, so surprising, so touching that I know little in music to equal it. It is God coming in the storm. When, after the following chorus, "Arise and shine, for thy light comes," loud applause, bravos, and *Tusches*[1] filled the room, I thanked God that you were not here, dear mother; for considering the impression made by this most imperfect rehearsal on the audience, and on me, who am so much younger, stronger, and less impressionable than you, I am sure you could not have borne it, the emotion would have been too much for you. But I feel quite ashamed of being the only one of the family allowed the happiness of witnessing this. How I wish you could all enjoy it! I do not remember ever having felt a similar sensation of mingled joy and sadness.

'After the rehearsal Felix went home with me, and we remained together till half past eleven. I should never have thought it possible that I could feel so happy anywhere in the world away from home as I do with these dear, excellent people. If only you were here also, dear William! it is really quite pleasant and comfortable to feel so much at home so far

[1] A confused, very exciting noise made by the brass instruments.

from home. But I am looking forward not a little to being really "at home." Ah, Rebecca! we have heard an overture to "Leonore," a rare piece! It has actually never been played, for Beethoven disliked it and put it aside. The man had no taste! I know few things so pretty, so charming, and so full of interest. Haslinger has printed a complete edition of his works without including it; but perhaps he will, after the present success.'

On the second day the Ninth Symphony was performed. The remarks, Fanny, who had formerly only known the work from the score, makes about the performance, show that even thorough musicians require time and a profound knowledge of this work to do it justice: 'This gigantic Ninth Symphony, which is so grand, and in parts so abominable, as only the work of the greatest of men could be, was played as if by one man; the finest *nuances*, the most hidden meanings, were expressed to perfection; the masses fell into shape, the symphony became comprehensible, and then it was really exquisitely beautiful. A gigantic tragedy, with a conclusion meant to be dithyrambic, but falling into the opposite extreme—the height of burlesque.'

Fanny concludes the account of the journey in her diary with these words: 'I see well that no married woman can travel for pleasure without either husband or child; and I shall never part from mine again unless I am obliged.'

She wrote to Klingemann:—

June 11, 1836.

Motto: Luft im Laub und Wind im Rohr
Und Alles ist zerstoben.
(A breeze in the leaves, a wind in the reeds,
And all has vanished).

And yet it was so beautiful!

But till I hear what you did together at Düsseldorf the next day, how you liked Brussels and Antwerp after you had left, how you arrived in London, and how Felix found his way to Frankfort, there is a blank in my memory, which I long to fill up.

That twofold life in Becker's hall and garden, and in the

Woringens' house, was really pleasant, and if existence in your metropolis contains moments of which we in our little German towns can form no conception, on the other hand a Rhenish musical festival is an event of which no adequate idea can pierce through the English fogs. And you and I, who so enjoyed this special occasion together, are sure to enjoy talking it over again. Felix is really a born conductor, and a very experienced one into the bargain. When one sees how things hitherto unheard of and scarcely believed possible are realised when the right man is in command, it is quite saddening to think how seldom the place finds the right man, and the man the right place. The world would wear a different aspect if that were always the case, and if there could be some kind of sun-dial showing (to parents especially) what direction to give to the education of their children. That this is the chief point in education is too seldom recognised. There is hardly any man so neglected by Providence that he might not do some good, if only he had been furnished with the means of turning his powers to account. But to return to Felix. I have observed with heart-felt pleasure his power of managing people; without apparently intending it, he contrives to interest all with whom he comes in contact, not only in himself, but in his cause, and that solely, as he believes, from its own inherent justice. And his music! That must be genuine, because it shines by its own light and has no need of outward artificial help. And this, again, is part of his character, and closely connected with all the rest. The crowds of people arriving from all directions, the meeting of friends not seen for years, made up a whole which was quite unique, and the shortness of the hours, the limited time allowed for the whole event, added to the charm. It is true, a few quiet days afterwards in that first of all hospitable houses would have been pleasant enough. *Ach! es war doch schöne Zeit!*

I have just received the first volume of Eckermann, and will look through it. It is long since I have read anything new that I liked in the least; most of the new publications are really not worth reading, a glance through as one turns over the leaves is quite sufficient. There has not been such an utter stagnation in literature for a long time.

June 7.

I read the greater part of the first volume of Eckermann yesterday, and gladly confess that I was much pleased with it. This seems to me far the best thing that has appeared on Goethe since his death, the reason being that such modesty and conscientiousness as the author's are rare in literature. From what he says of himself, it is clear that he was a very narrow-minded man, perfectly absorbed in Goethe, but one who could listen attentively and record faithfully, and thus I really believe that no work by Goethe himself gives a more genuine and original portrait of the poet. I am struck by the constant recurrence in this book of remarks father used to make; he would have been greatly pleased if he could have known it. Another reason for my liking it is that it contains no scandal. This speaks highly in favour of Eckermann, for how easily he might have written a 'piquant' book! In short, as far as the present case goes, I gladly and completely retract my accusation.[1] . . . This pleasant little book claims one's interest to the end, and I feel personally obliged to the author for his wise moderation in writing these two small volumes containing pure gold, instead of the weighty tomes he undoubtedly could have filled.

In conclusion, I will put you a prize question. How is it possible to speak of the universal opinion of any period when 'St. Paul' and the 'Huguenots' appear at the same time, and both find their public? I, belonging to the admirers of the former work, find now a peculiar pleasure in tasking my memory to complete the solo-pieces from the voice-parts, which is all I possess of the music. Where these are not sufficient I am obliged to add from memory until I get the printed score. To-day I tried to make out the famous duet of the false witnesses, all I knew being that I had to fill in eleven bars. I could only make out eight, however.

Rebecca was ordered to Franzensbad for her health, and

[1] This refers to a cutting criticism on a publication of Varnhagen's, which we have omitted, and which concludes: 'Varnhagen will do all the damage he is capable of, and when he is dead, and his memoirs are published, scandal will begin again with fresh vigour.'

started in the beginning of July alone with her child, Dirichlet being detained in Berlin by his lectures. At first she was very uncomfortable in the miserable little place, for the weather was bad, and she herself in a good deal of suffering. Some of her letters may follow here.

Alas! Franzensbad: July 10, 1836.

Motto: Very pretty, but rather dull.

Please write often, for then I shall have at any rate one piece of news—that I have received your letters. Dear me, what a life! *On ne m'y attrappera plus.* The doctor, who is very attentive, has forbidden me to talk while taking my exercise, and recommended solitary walks. I follow his advice conscientiously, and avoid all the good Berlin people, but they, unhappily, do not avoid me. Yesterday evening I received such an *assemblée* that my six chairs were not sufficient; but at half past seven the rout was over. The laziness of everybody here is contagious; so far, I have done absolutely nothing, not even looked about me for a *Flügel*;[1] but I verily believe that such a thing is unknown, unless attached to a goose or a hen. My trip is not much like yours to the musical festival; instead of the excited atmosphere of pleasure one finds on such occasions, the air here is dull and stupefying, and I cannot help succumbing to it.

To-day I have seen a 'new' paper: the greatest news it contained was the death of Rouget de Lisle, of which I had heard before I left Berlin. Does nothing ever happen here at all? I, as the latest gazette, was called upon to contradict the report of a second attempt to assassinate Louis Philippe.

An infant phenomenon of five is setting the lazy ears and tongues in motion here. One of these days I shall go and hear it play its 'variations by heart.' I am afraid I shall also hear every box on the ears that has been inflicted on the poor child. If you see X., tell her I suspect her of having had a clandestine love-affair here, or she could not have enjoyed herself so much. My experience is very unlike hers; my constant thought being, 'October must come some day,' which means August, which means Dirichlet. Good-bye! Think of poor me.

[1] A wing—the German name for a grand-piano.

July 18.

My life here goes on in the same style, so, so, la, la; but at any rate I am now in good health, and drink, walk, bathe, and rest without sleeping; to-day, for the first time, I shall dine at the *table d'hôte*, by general request. Hungarian wines? My best compliments, but I am not allowed; they are too exciting. I have just tried a so-called piano—such a rattling old concern! The day after to-morrow there is a charity-ball; perhaps I shall go and watch it for a quarter of an hour, to see the Poles and the Austrian nobility in full dress: they are very handsome, not at all like your Berlin fops. In this house two little countesses are staying, one exactly like the other, elegant and graceful, with black eyes and hair. They look about them so merrily, and with such a genuine fifteen-year-old significance, that I always feel inclined to kiss my hand to them, as they stroll about so prettily before my window. To-day the whole company met in my lodgings and were discussing pleasure, when a lace-merchant was announced, and called in with exclamations of joy. E. at first wanted to buy the whole stook; then bargained for half, and at last bought a tiny little piece. I bought one too. Now, good night. The wind alone is whispering in the solemn silence. Everybody has gone to bed, for it is—nine o'clock.

July 24.

I am writing to a brilliant accompaniment of military music, serenading Herr von R., who has arrived at this house. Since he came, I have often been reminded of the late General B., for the very noble young ladies above me hammer away every day at the same galop. But, dear children, what cold weather! I wish I had a good fur and a pair of Parisians instead of my gay white muslin dresses. But I begin to feel very well indeed, and they say I have quite red cheeks. Really one sees *gens de l'autre monde* here! What will you say to a Prince Wladoyano from Roumania, who looks like a young Paganini, and whose wife, a Princess Ghika from Bucharest, trails the most beautiful Turkish shawls (which E., like an enthusiastic connoisseur, estimates at 1,500 thalers) along the ground early in the morning

We have also a most beautiful Russian lady, who appears at the *Brunnen* in a *négligé* of black velvet with blond-lace. E. cannot get over her enthusiasm about the exquisite shawls that sweep the gravel every morning. Excuse these shawl-details, but what else can I say? I wish to goodness that Dirichlet were here! I can hardly await the time. Madame M. has left to-day for Marienbad, and wishes 'to be put at everybody's feet.' ('Have you any levers to lift me up again?') For two weeks and a half now I have not heard a sensible word. Is this life? What a wretched existence it is, when one rejoices in every hour that is over! It is like a winter's sleep in summer.

August 6.—After all my dull, peevish letters, how astonished you will be when I write that I am enjoying myself exceedingly! Since Dirichlet came I am quite a changed person, and have, as R. says, a good *humeur*. We have fine weather, make excursions, and spend the whole day in the open air, chat with some nice new acquaintances, whom even Dirichlet allows to be pleasant; the baths are doing me good: in a word, everything has changed for the better. So long as I was by myself, I felt like a stray sheep, not knowing where to turn, and shrinking from all strange faces, kind or unkind. Now, after our early morning draught, we breakfast in the park, inviting each other in turns, and making up our own parties at the coffee-tables; then dine in the *Kursaal*, take an afternoon drive, when coffee again plays an important part, or else go to the park, where there is plenty of society. If only the weather will keep fine, we may play 'All's well that ends well,' and forget the melancholy beginning. To-day Ottokind[1] was here, and the whole population, high and low, stared at him in the streets. We did not stir from our place in the park; but virtue was rewarded, for he passed close by, and talked to the R.s near us, so I could see him very well indeed. His appearance is most insignificant.

David's engagement to All the Russias[2] has pleased more than it surprised me. Felix must not be behindhand now his first fiddle leads the dance, and I am going to preach to him on

[1] The King of Greece.

[2] David, then *Concertmeister* at Leipzig, married a Russian princess.

that text. But it is a most amusing story, and doubly so here, where I have opportunities of seeing the absurd pride of the Russian nobility. They keep aloof from everybody, for fear of breathing the same air with other people; and I am surprised that they condescend to drink out of the same *Brunnen* with the *canaille*! You both, mother and Fanny, write me delightful letters, and if I were generous I should send them back again, so as to give you something pretty to read. But you, dear mother, must tame down that heart of sixteen, which gives you no rest, because Felix is in love. Cannot Dr. W. give you a prescription for this youthfulness of mind? But it is exciting, even for a sister; and I wish we knew something certain. I am sure he has found some one worth having, for he is not without taste. Why does my imagination dwell upon Jeanrenaud or Souchay? Tell me what you think.

Unheard-of festivities are going on here. Yesterday there was a grand ball in honour of King Otto and the Queen of Bavaria; the *Brunnen* were illuminated, and the whole fashionable world—the Russians, the nobility, and your daughter—were present. If you want to know what Otto is like, picture to yourself Schubring, but still smaller, thinner, more sickly and sallow: he limps on one foot, has no front teeth (as you hear when he speaks), and is rather deaf. But I really pitied the poor creature, and his bad dancing was more the effect of a heavy heart than heavy heels. I closely examined the Greeks who form his suite, to find out which of them will eventually strangle him. The physiognomies of all are unprepossessing, and by no means Hellenic, the only exception being Mauromichalis, whom they have also dressed in Greek costume 'for show.' From my post of observation I saw the whole performance well. The master of the ceremonies presented the guests to each other, the Queen said something agreeable to every one, the very pretty daughter of the Duke of Oldenburg sent off her chamberlain to order R.'s son-in-law to dance with her; their bowings and curtseyings—everything, in fact. Dear me, what a world it was! The Russian set only danced with the princes of the blood. They, the Russians, have established a miniature empire of their own here, making themselves at home in their domineer-

ing style everywhere, even playing Zeck on the promenade, which is a public walk. There the men shout like mad, their uncultured voices reminding one of the hissing of the knout, and almost tear the dresses off their very pretty women—for they are that, as even I cannot deny. Nobody else, high or low, dares approach them. Amongst them is a Madame de M., who makes me understand Armida, Circe, the Sirens, and Co. as I never did before. Any one more beautiful I never saw, and yet not a feature in her face expresses good-nature, or indeed feeling of any kind—all is cold calculation. Poisoned draughts and daggers are familiar tools with her, I am convinced; but she is so divinely beautiful, so seductive, so charming, that you cannot take your eyes off her, and I could scarcely resent even Dirichlet's being desperately in love with her. But she reserves the fascination of her eyes for counts and princes. I have never met with such an accomplished flirt, even in a novel, but her coquetry is difficult to analyse; she dresses like a child, in a white frock, with a fresh flower or two in her hair, but the effect of all, down to the last thread, is calculated. Dear me! how innocent we good ladies of Berlin are! Such arts as these are out of our reach altogether!

On Wednesday Prince Metternich came to wait upon King Otto. We followed him to the *Brunnen*, and passed close to him three times: he is a fine man, with a noble *tournure*, and has the kind of nose so many great men have; at the same time, he is a little like the Itzigs, although I do not think that he belongs to '*the* tribe.' His pretty young wife looks scarcely older than his daughter, who was also of the party.

From Franzensbad the Dirichlets, accompanied by Professor Gans, went to Marienbad. Chopin was staying there, but never appeared, and his physician and a Polish countess, who assumed complete command over him, did not allow him to play. Rebecca's desire to hear the man of whose playing she had heard such wonders from Felix and Paul, was so strong that she resolved, as she says, to commit a *bassesse* and use her rights as 'sœur de Messieurs Paul et Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.'

'The *bassesse* against Chopin,' she wrote a few days afterwards, 'has been committed, and was a complete failure. Dirichlet went to see him and begged for but one mazurka for a *sœur*, etc. "Impossible! mal aux nerfs; mauvais piano—et comment se porte cette chère Madame Hensel, et Paul, est marié? heureux couple!" &c. "Allez-vous promener?" The first and last attempt of the kind we ever make.'

'On Sunday morning we started for Marienbad, Mme Franke, Gans, and Magnus accompanying us to our carriage, and drove off through stubble-fields, miserable huts, and wild fir-crowned hills, for that country of witches, Bohemia. I looked about me on all sides for some trace of gipsy-camps or witches' brooms. Judging by Felix's sketches it must be very much like the Scotch Highlands, for the stubble gives the fields a moor-like aspect, but the people seem universally kind, and one is not over-molested by beggars. That race seems more good-natured here than at home, for the smallest gift produces a *Küss d'Hand* (I kiss your hand); we saw many fine, dark-complexioned specimens. We spent the first night at Klattau, the road to which passes through the town of Laus, and another route through Mis—names which delighted Frank. Yesterday, Monday, we travelled through Horasdiowitz, Strakonitz, and Wodnian (I pronounce these names admirably), to Budweis, a queer place, with flat roofs, innumerable bells, images of saints in cages before the houses, and other signs of Catholicism. We had the honour of occupying the same room in which Charles X. heard mass, dined, played cards, and, I believe, hunted also; at least, the room is large enough. To-day was a splendid day for travelling—delightful weather, warm, but with a breeze, and we had the first good potatoes I have tasted for a long time, at Kaplitz. Unfortunately, I was not allowed to take butter with them, as it does not agree with the iron I am supposed to have still in my system. Fruit is also forbidden. At six we arrived at this place, Freistadt. We might have gone on for another stage, but the pretty little town beguiled us; it is two miles beyond the German frontier, on either side of which the countries are almost as distinct from each other as the cantons of Vaud and Valais. Here begin forests, hills of a prettier out-

line, meadows, and well-built villages, the mountains of Ischl being discernible far away in the distance. We climbed a hill near the town, saw the sunset, learned by heart the contour of the beautiful Ischl mountains silhouetted in dark-blue against the rosy sunset sky, spoiled three leaves in my sketch-book under the delusion that we were drawing, and walked round the ancient fortifications with their gray walls and towers. The moat is filled up and planted with fruit-trees, and the whole town surrounded by a pretty walk with fine lime-trees. It was a lovely evening, and reminded me strongly of our walk at Bahlingen, where we saw the Alps for the first time. How I wish you were all here, now that the fine scenery is beginning. All this is only an introduction, and yet I am quite delighted already. Oh, Fanny! why cannot we make a tour of this kind together? And why could not father have seen this beautiful country? Alas! when will it be possible to enjoy an hour of pleasure without a fresh pang reminding us of our loss!'

The Dirichlets travelled as far as Gastein, but the cholera prevented them going to Italy. 'Otherwise,' Rebecca wrote, 'I see no reason why we should not have gone as far as Naples.' At Munich Dirichlet received the news of the death of his only surviving sister.

Munich: September 15.

We arrived here yesterday morning, and only heard then of the death of Dirichlet's sister, as we have not been to Inspruck. I cannot tell you how sorry I am, for the poor mother especially. I constantly think of our poor grandmother, who used to say we ought to pray God not to send us all the affliction we are able to bear; and, after all, she has lived long enough to survive ten children! We have resolved to let her have the only joy left her in this world, so my poor Dirichlet goes to Aix-la-Chapelle from Leipzig, where he takes me first. If we had known it before, we would have taken her her little grandson; but it is too late in the year now for Walter and me to travel.

As you can fancy, I am not in the mood now for sight-seeing and pleasuring—indeed, I would rather have gone

straight on; but the dull prose of life has its rights and asserts them, so we must stay here till Sunday, to have our clothes washed. Little as I am in the humour for it, I still go on sight-seeing; for though the finest works of art fail to kindle my admiration now, I shall be glad some day to have seen them. At present, all my thoughts are with our poor mother. This morning Dirichlet persuaded me to spend an hour at Leuchtenberg's Collection, which will unfortunately not be open much longer. The small room contains many works of genius. Those works which bear the impress of man's mind and skill exercise on us a far more powerful fascination than anything in inanimate nature.

Dirichlet left his wife and child at Nuremberg, and hastened to his parents. He was their only surviving child, but also their favourite, and he became henceforward their one joy. The mother was destined to survive even this her last treasure, and to die in her hundredth year.

At Nuremberg Schiller's words from Tell, 'Hier wird gefreit und anderswo begraben' ('Here people woo, and there they mourn their dead') were once more realised. Whilst Dirichlet was making his preparations for leaving his wife and child and going to his parents, arrived the news of Felix's engagement to Cécile Jeanrenaud. Rebecca had been eagerly expecting this event during the whole journey. The family were aware that Felix had set his whole affections on a beautiful girl in the Rhine provinces; but the knowledge was founded only on rumour. Rebecca writes from Gastein that she had taken up the *Allgemeine Zeitung* in the hope of seeing among the paragraphs on the Frankfort Fair, 'The well-known musician Felix Mendelssohn on such and such a day was betrothed to,' etc.; but all she could find was 'cotton market flat' and a report of the Bundestag. In Nuremberg Rebecca received a letter from Felix himself with the welcome news. He had returned to Leipzig immediately after his engagement, and thither she followed him, in great delight at the long-looked-for intelligence, and was thus the first of his family to see him in his happiness. She found him very bright but composed, and with an air of profound satisfaction: he was also more communicative

than he had been for a long time, and, she says, she could scarcely have believed love would become him so well, for he was more than amiable. So her stay at Leipzig was prolonged from day to day, and what happened in the end may be given in her own words.

Leipzig: October 4, 1836.

Yesterday I got up very early, in order to write you a respectable letter, thanking you for your kindness in wishing me to enjoy myself here, whilst you are endeavouring to comfort your afflicted parents. I meant to tell you that Felix, having again to change his lodgings on account of his tiresome landlord, is going back to the Pensas', where there is no room for us, and that consequently we were also obliged to move; also that, being anxious to arrange everything comfortably at Berlin before your return, etc., I would not avail myself of your kind leave of absence, but would start for home at once. Three pages had I filled when Felix came in. 'Good morning, Rebecca!' 'Good morning, Felix!' 'Well, you are going, of course, to stay on here till Dirichlet comes to fetch you?' I: 'No, I have just written to tell him that it will not do.' Felix: 'Where is the letter?' I: 'Here, do you want to read it?' Felix: 'No.' And with that he walked to the table, took up the letter, and tore it to atoms. I was so startled that I could not make up my mind to write another all yesterday, nor do I yet know what to decide. A week in the hotel would, I am afraid, quite ruin me; on the other hand, it is my maxim never to grudge myself a pleasure, and it is very charming here. Felix is most dear; he plays a great deal to me, and we have no end of chat together. He is kind enough to consider my society as some compensation for his separation from his betrothed. David, too, keeps saying that a week is no visit at all, a fortnight only a week, and so on. As I have said before, I do not know what to decide.

My letter of yesterday contained a great deal of information now lost, but one piece of news I must repeat. Felix has found a warm friend and patron in Rossini, who takes a great interest in his music, had a very serious conversation with him, and advised him to compose in a more popular style, etc. Moreover,

Kalkbrenner's best pupil, Mr. Stamaty, *élève du Conservatoire de Paris*, and popular music-master there, is here in Germany learning music from Felix, and refuses to play until he has learned something better. In fact, except in Berlin and in Aix-la-Chapelle, people are beginning to understand his music. Here he is perfectly adored.

But now listen: to-morrow I cannot leave, for Felix has invited a small party; Lipinsky and David are to make music, and I am necessary to make tea. The day after to-morrow there is a rehearsal of Lipinsky's concert, at which Felix's 'Melusina' is to be performed, and on Friday the concert itself takes place. At present I have arranged to start on Saturday, but really I cannot even promise that. And now good-bye, my dear good husband; I am counting the days until we meet again either here or in Berlin, but I am as happy here as I can be anywhere without you. I never think of your mother without deep emotion. May God spare her, and may we be able to do something towards making the rest of her life happy!

Thus Rebecca suffered *douce violence*, and stayed at Leipzig the greater part of October.

During her absence the young Goethe, grandson of the poet, passed through Berlin, and Fanny writes: 'He is a good-natured-looking young fellow of eighteen, whom nobody would talk about if his name were Werner, but from whom everybody expects a great deal, because his name is Goethe.' Upon the whole the family spent the summer of 1836 very quietly. Their whole attention was fixed upon Frankfort, and the constant expectation of important events there produced 'that frame of mind in which one takes every ring for the postman, and every bill for the longed-for letter, to say nothing of looking up excitedly every time the door opens.'

At last, in September, the postman really brought to the mother the desired news, that her last child had also found the companion destined for him.

Frankfort: September 9, 1836.

Dear Mother,—I have only this moment returned to my room, but I can settle to nothing till I have written to tell you

that I have just been accepted by Cécile Jeanrenaud. My head is quite giddy from the events of the day; it is already late at night, and I have nothing else to say; but I must write to you. I feel so rich and happy. To-morrow I will, if I can, write a long letter, and so, if possible, will my dear betrothed.

Your letter is lying before me, and I have opened it just to see that you are well, but I cannot read it yet. Farewell, and keep me always in your thoughts. FELIX.

In 1836 Mendelssohn received a confidential offer of the conductorship of the Cäcilien-Verein at Frankfort-on-the-Maine. Schelble, the founder, who had hitherto conducted it himself, had long been seriously ill, and the institution was in danger of breaking up, unless some musician of ability could be found to carry it on. Mendelssohn replied at once that any permanent arrangement of the kind was out of the question, as he would on no account give up his post at Leipzig; but that if there was any chance of Schelble's recovering after rest and change of air sufficiently to resume the directorship for the winter, he would gladly undertake it for the summer. For the sake of rendering so important a service to a valued friend, and to a cause he had much at heart, he readily gave up his former plan of a tour in Switzerland, to end with sea-bathing at Genoa.

Seldom has good action met with more immediate reward. Felix went to Frankfort on June 4, directly after the Düsseldorf musical festival, and at first gave himself up entirely to rest and refreshment, in the lovely scenery round Frankfort. Few men were able to work harder than he, and not many have had the same power of enjoying complete relaxation, especially amid fine scenery, after a period of turmoil and excitement, such as the Düsseldorf festival, when for weeks together he had not a minute to call his own. The direction of the Cäcilien-Verein did not absorb too much of his time, and he had plenty of leisure. He frequently mentions a wood: 'to ramble there of an evening under the splendid beeches, among the plants and flowers, blackberries and strawberries, makes one's heart swell with gratitude.'

And in another sense, too, his heart was full. Mme. Jeanrenaud, the widow of a Protestant clergyman at Frankfort, had two daughters, one, Cécile, being peculiarly lovely and attractive. Felix, who had been introduced to the family during his former stay at Frankfort, now visited them again, and it is more than possible that his thoughts were turned in this direction when he promised Fanny at Christmas 1835 that he would look about him on the Rhine for a wife in the course of the summer. He found what he sought in Cécile Jeanrenaud. She was not a striking person in any way, neither extraordinarily clever, brilliantly witty, nor exceptionally accomplished, but perhaps it was the very absence of these qualities which made her society exercise an influence as soothing and refreshing as that of the open sky or running water.

And such a wife was perfectly suited to one of Felix's nervous, excitable temperament: her gentleness and brightness gave her an influence over him which a woman of a different character could never have obtained, and made his life one continued course of happiness till the close.

There were prejudices against him to be overcome at first. Cécile once wrote to Fanny that her first idea of Felix had been of a stiff, disagreeable, jealous old man, who played dull fugues with a velvet cap on his head. This delusion was dispelled of course by the first interview, and he soon became intimately acquainted with the daughter. Having gained her affections, it did not take long to gain over the other influential members of the family.

Before, however, making a formal declaration, he accompanied Schadow to Scheveningen for sea-bathing. This was partly in fulfilment of a promise given at Düsseldorf, and partly to test his love by a prolonged absence. He was naturally in rather low spirits during the separation, as all his letters testify.

Felix to Rebecca.

Frankfort-on-the-Maine: July 24, 1836.

Although I am a bad correspondent just now, I must write you a line at Franzensbad, before I start for the seaside, for

I will not have it said that at any period of my life I did not write to you. The present period is a very strange one, for I am more desperately in love than I ever was in my life before, and I do not know what to do. I leave Frankfort the day after to-morrow, but I feel as if it would cost me my life. At any rate I intend to return here and see this charming girl once more before I go back to Leipzig. But I have not an idea whether she likes me, or not, and I do not know what to do to make her like me as I have said already. But one thing is certain, that to her I owe the first real happiness I have enjoyed this year, and I now feel fresh and hopeful again for the first time. When away from her, though, I am always sad—now, you see, I have let you into a secret, which nobody else knows anything about; but in order that you may set the world an example of discretion, I will tell you nothing more If you want further information, write to me at the Hague, *poste restante*, for the day after to-morrow I am going to the detestable seaside. O Rebecca! what shall I do?

Such is my mood[1] now the whole day. I can neither compose nor play the piano: the utmost I can do is to sketch a little. But I must thank you for your kind expressions about 'St. Paul': such words from you are the best and dearest that I can ever hear, and what you and Fanny say about the work the public says—for no other exists for me. I only wish you would write to me a few more times about it, and very minutely as to my other music. Do you think it can be indifferent to me whether you like anything of that kind or not?

The whole time that I have been here I have worked at 'St. Paul,' because I wished to publish it in as complete a form as possible; and, moreover, I am quite convinced that the beginning of the first and the end of the second part are now three times as good as they were—which was, indeed, my duty; for in many points, especially as to subordinate matters in so large a work, I only succeed by degrees in realising my thoughts and expressing them clearly. In the principal movements and melodies I cannot, indeed, make any subsequent alterations,

[1] Part of this letter has been published before, in Lady Wallace's translation.

because they occur at once to my mind, just as they are; but I am not sufficiently advanced to say this of *every* part. I have now, however, been working for rather more than two years at one oratorio: this is certainly a very long time, and I rejoice at the approach of the moment when I shall correct the proofs and be done with it, and begin with something else. I intend first to write some symphonies. I have hardly composed anything here, as the first page will explain, I am much too low-spirited. How you would laugh to see me in such a state!

This morning four members of the Cäcilien-Verein, which I conducted for the last time on Wednesday, presented me in the name of the association with a travelling dressing-case. It is more fit for a prince travelling incognito than for a musician, being a *Ne plus ultra* of splendour and elegance, with the inscription 'F. M. B. and Cæcilia,' which pleases me very much. This letter is certainly one of the most stupid ever written, but you are at Franzensbad and I am going to Scheveningen, and that, as Droysen says, 'is of the most stupid' too.

Felix to his Mother.

The Hague: August 9, 1836.

I received your kind letter the day before yesterday, and thank you for it from my heart. But you really see more in my last letter than I intended to say, and when you speak of my betrothal, my happiness, and the coming change in my prospects, I can only say that as yet all is very uncertain. But I thank you for the dear, kind words you wrote about the mere possibility, and feel inclined to consider them as your permission to take this step, so necessary for my happiness. In any case I should like to have your consent, that I may no longer be tormented by doubts, on this head at any rate. Indeed, my special object in writing is to ask you for it. If you tell me that you are ready once more to trust me entirely, and offer me again the full liberty I have enjoyed in former years, you will make me very happy. You may rest assured that I shall not abuse your confidence, and perhaps I have done something to deserve it. Please tell me so, dear mother.

With all this, however, bear in mind what I wrote in the beginning. All I ask is that you will give me your consent; for, though I suppose my age makes it no longer legally necessary, I will not act without it. But whether I shall be able to avail myself of it on my return to Frankfort, that, as I said before, is a perfect mystery. All depends on the state in which I find matters there, for I really feel completely ignorant now. On one point, however, I am quite clear, and that is that I would gladly send Holland, its Dutchmen, sea-baths, bathing-cars, *Kursaal*, and visitors, to the devil, and wish I was back in Frankfort. When I have seen this charming girl again, I hope the suspense will soon be over, and I shall know whether we are to be anything—or rather everything—to each other, or not; at present I really know very little of her, and she of me, so I cannot answer all your questions about her. This much I can tell you, that she made my stay at Frankfort very happy, just when I needed a little happiness, and did not expect to get it; also that her father, Pastor Jeanrenaud, is dead, and that she has been educated at home with the utmost care and tenderness by her mother (a Souchay), that her Christian name is Cécile, and that I love her very much.

Dear mother, there is one thing more I wish to ask, and that is, that you will not allow yourself to be agitated about me. I perceive from your letter that you are very anxious, and that will make me anxious too, whereas I wish to be calm and collected, and to go through this affair with the coolness I have always managed to preserve hitherto, when taking an important step in life. I beg you also not to speak about the matter to any one, especially not to any one at Frankfort, as it might destroy my whole chance. Dear mother, please answer this immediately.

But his time at the sea came to an end, and Felix hastened back to Frankfort, where the engagement was shortly concluded. He could not, however, enjoy his happiness long, as he had to return to Leipzig immediately afterwards. Of course the family were eager to hear about the betrothed, and such enthusiastic accounts came from all sides that they grew more

and more desirous of making her personal acquaintance. But this was not to be for some time. A lively correspondence soon began, and some of the letters may follow here.

Felix to Fanny.

Frankfort: December 13, 1836.

Yes, my dear Fance, here I am again writing to you at Cécile's desk, and feeling most happy. But what words am I to use to describe my happiness? I do not know, and am dumb, but not from the same reason as the apes on the Orinoco—far from it. There is one drawback, however, which makes me feel now and then as if I were going mad, and that is our calls, which must begin to-morrow. There are 163 of them exactly! What do you say to that, Cantor? And, by my beard, I am bound to pay them all, and no lamentations will get me let off one. But really, I do not mind even that—I am so happy. I have now spent four days with my Cécile, and have a week more before me. Everything in the house is so nice and pleasant, and Karl Jeanrenaud, whose acquaintance I have only made this time, is as amiable and kind as the others—such a good fellow. Moreover, I have a lot of good music in my head, which I know you will like, and altogether I can exclaim with heartfelt thankfulness, What a happy man I am! Farewell, etc.

Fanny to Cécile.

Berlin: December 23, 1836.

. . . Your drawing, dear Cécile, has given us great pleasure, and we all like it very much, especially Hensel, who, knowing most about it, can appreciate it best, and is, I may say, a very amiable public. You will allow me, I know, to sound the praises of my husband a little, or rather to tell you that I can never praise him enough. He is such an excellent man that I can say of him as you do of Felix, that his talent is by no means the best part of him. And yet I wish you could see the picture he has just finished: to my mind it shows not only brilliant powers, but a good heart.

But, dear children! how can you think of making 163 calls? That is beyond endurance. We have calculated it over and over again, and make out that if you pay twenty a day—which is barely possible—you will still have a week, which must be consumed entirely in paying visits—a superhuman task. I can only hope that one of you may sprain your ankle at the third call, or catch a slight cold, just sufficient to serve as an excuse. If you will but look at these 163 calls in their true light, and call to mind that they will have to be repeated after your marriage, you may, perhaps, be induced to have the ceremony at Leipzig. Certain reasons, which modesty prevents my mentioning, make me think this a very good plan. Ah! if you were going to be here to-morrow! I think it will be so nice. Two large orange-trees in the ante-room are to be lighted up with little lamps made of hollow lemons, and the large Christmas-trees are in the blue room. We shall arrange a little lottery, with no blanks, of course, for Hensel's pupils; and they are also preparing some amusement—but it is to be a surprise for me, so I know nothing about it. My present to Hensel—one your artistic mind will appreciate—is to be an ounce of genuine ultramarine; it is so very expensive here that he has not bought any for a long time. I must finish this letter this afternoon, for to-morrow I shall have to complete my Christmas arrangements.

Felix to Fanny.

Leipzig: December 31, 1836.

Dear Fanny,—I must write to thank you and Hensel for your charming contributions to my album, and to tell you what pleasure you have given me. I wish you could have seen how pleased my Cécile was. The precious sketches were hardly out of her hands the whole evening, and she kept looking at them again and again. Her pleasure would, I know, have been quite sufficient reward for you. O Fanny, this has been a Christmas for me! The like of it I have never seen before, and never shall see again. I have been spending the most perfect time, the happiest days, in which the mere fact of existence fills one with fresh joy and gratitude. I cannot describe it all to you, for you do not

yet know my Cécile. How I wish you did! They gave me her portrait on Christmas-eve, but it only stirred up afresh my wrath against all bad artists, and I was very near saying most impolite things to the painter, B. by name, who comes from Vienna. However, I restrained myself, because Mme. Jeanrenaud had been so kind and intended to give me pleasure, and because Cécile has sat so often for her portrait. Still it is abominable. She looks like an ordinary young woman flattered, and the picture is full of coarse mistakes. I pointed out a few to the artist, and he became quite confused, and confessed to them at once. It is really too bad that with such a sitter the fellow could not have shown a spark of poetry—by which I mean truth to nature; he need not have painted this affected young person with a pink and white complexion, and light-blue eyes, instead of my Cécile with her dark-blue eyes, brunette complexion, and perfectly natural manner. I am very curious to see Veit's portrait; he is painting one which will be, I hope, far superior to this, though her mobile countenance must present great difficulties to an artist.

January 4, 1837.—Accept my hearty good wishes for the New Year, in which we have now made some progress. I went home in such low spirits last New Year's eve, and heard the clock strike twelve from my bed; little did I think that I should be spending the last hours of the same year feeling so intensely thankful, and greet the new one with such hope and joy. I praise God for all His tender mercies, and you share my feelings and rejoice in my happiness, I know.

Felix to Fanny.

Leipzig: January 24, 1837.

. . . I intend leaving for Frankfort on the 17th of March, and the church-performance[1] takes place on the 18th. I had nearly said 'alas,' for I do not feel in the least inclined for it at present, and would rather not have to go through so much bustle and excitement so shortly before my wedding-tour. I vituperate

[1] 'St. Paul' was produced in the church at Leipzig.

Cécile M. B.

the whole business of concerts and music here, and yet cannot help blessing it now and then, too, for there is a great deal about it that is very delightful. You cannot think how many interesting phenomena pass across our horizon during a winter-season: how I wish that you could take part in it for once—it would amuse you infinitely. Last week Bennett played his C minor concerto, and was enthusiastically applauded by the Leipzigers, who have all of a sudden become his friends and admirers; indeed, he is the sole topic of conversation here now. At the concert before Molique played exquisitely. A new overture by Spohr, 'The daughter of the air,' is coming out; he writes to me that the idea was suggested to him by my 'Melusina.' At the charity-concert, a new overture of Bennett's is to be played, and we have already had two new ones by Hiller (who desires to be remembered to you every time I write); moreover, we intend trying Radziwill's 'Faust' soon, and Mme. Crescini has promised to come, so you good people of Berlin had better hold your tongues.

Rebecca to Cécile.

March 11, 1837.

I cannot tell you, dear Cécile, how glad I am that you are still at Leipzig, which is comparatively near us, and that you will see mother and hear 'St. Paul' before you go. If only we were not still quite so far off, or if we could have a telescope from the Leipziger Strasse to Reichel's Garten, or a railway, or if it were not for many reasons, so difficult for me to move! Felix, who, between ourselves, leads the whole concert, committee, artists, and all by the nose, might well take a few days' leave and bring you here, if he felt seriously so inclined, and you did not object to his company. You shall see Berlin in all its glory, or in no glory at all, whichever you like: the latter would show the town to the best advantage. But I wish I were at Leipzig, sitting by you in the chorus: I would certainly take up my points, and mind my rests. I suppose you have never sung in a chorus before. Is it not delightful? Ah! I must say, Give me a musician. What pleasure Felix's different varieties of

music will give you! Does he play you any of his funny pieces, or is he too much in love? If he does, ask him for the preludes *à l'enfant* with wrong conclusions: they would make me laugh on my death-bed. Unfortunately we are quite shut out from this musical life, as we have no musical friends now, and have to depend entirely on Fanny's grand performances, which only take place now and then. They are really very beautiful, but after them people are afraid of playing or singing before Fanny, so we have music only when we are by ourselves. My best love to Felix. Does he not look handsome at his conductor's desk? I like to watch him, especially when he is pleased: he nods his head and pushes out his under-lip just as if there were nobody in the room at all.

Felix to Fanny.[1]

March 7, 1837.

I must write to you about your song yesterday. How beautiful it was! You know what my opinion of it always has been, but I was curious to see whether my old favourite, which I had only heard hitherto sung by Rebecca to your accompaniment in the gray room with the engravings, would have the same effect here in the crowded hall, with the glare of the lamps, and after listening to noisy orchestral music. I felt so strange when I began, your soft, pretty symphony imitating the waves, with all the people listening in perfect silence; but never did the song please me better. The people understood it, too, for there was a hum of approbation each time the refrain returned with the long E, and much applause when it was over. Mme. Grabow sang it correctly, though not nearly as well as Rebecca, but she did the last bars very prettily. Bennett, who was in the orchestra, sends his compliments, and begs me to tell you all that you know already about the song, and I thank you in the name of the public of Leipzig and elsewhere for publishing it against my wish.

This referred to a song Fanny had published. In Felix's first books of songs Opus 8 and 9, 'The 'Home-spell,' 'Italy,'

[1] After the performance of one of her songs at Leipzig.

and 'Suleika and Hatem,' Nos. 2, 3, and 12 in Opus 8, and 'Sleepless,' 'Forsaken,' and 'The Nun,' Nos. 7, 10, and 12 in Opus 9, had been by Fanny. This was well known among the friends of the family, but the public imagined her share of Felix's publications to be much larger. In the early part of 1837 Fanny sent a song to Schlesinger, the music-publisher. He published it in an album, and Felix wrote in addition to the letter already given, 'Do you know, Fance, your song in A major in Schlesinger's Album is a grand success here? The new *Musical Gazett* (I mean the editor, who dines at the same hotel with me) is quite enthusiastic about you. They all say it is the best thing in the album—a bad compliment, for nothing else is good. But they really appreciate it. So now you are a real author, and I hope you feel pleased.'

She certainly did feel pleased; for the year before she had been much pained at the want of interest in her musical pursuits. By a singular chance, as Rebecca writes to Cécile, their circle of friends was then composed of wholly unmusical people —a circumstance of which Fanny also complains in a letter to Klingemann of July 15, 1836.

'. . . I inclose two pianoforte-pieces which I have written since I came home from Düsseldorf. I leave it to you to say whether they are worth presenting to my unknown young friend, but I must add that it is a pleasure to me to find a public for my little pieces in London, for here I have none at all. Once a year, perhaps, some one will copy a piece of mine, or ask me to play something special—certainly not oftener; and now that Rebecca has left off singing, my songs lie unheeded and unknown. If nobody ever offers an opinion, or takes the slightest interest in one's productions, one loses in time not only all pleasure in them, but all power of judging of their value. Felix, who is alone a sufficient public for me, is so seldom here that he cannot help me much, and thus I am thrown back entirely on myself. But my own delight in music and Hensel's sympathy keep me awake still, and I cannot help considering it a sign of talent that I do not give it up, though I can get nobody to take an interest in my efforts. But enough of this uninteresting topic.'

Another letter to the same shows her candid appreciation of what others accomplished in music.

December 16, 1836.

We have been hearing an excellent pianist, Döhler, who was doubly interesting to me, as I have never heard Thalberg, and he has enabled me to form an idea of the latest progress in execution. I am so fond of learning anything, and here we have so few opportunities! If this nice young virtuoso would but adopt a more solid taste, he might become something extraordinary. I cannot understand how it is possible with all the constant revolutions in music for variations to hold their own as they do with both composers and pianists. I have music at my house the day after to-morrow; then comes Christmas, which puts a stop to all music except trumpets and rattles. I wish you were here!

The impression made on her by the finished execution of modern pianists was no passing one; and it even made her unduly hard on herself. She writes to Klingemann on April 3, 1837: '. . . By an association of ideas my mind recurs to your Collard piano, which I appreciate much, and envy you. With all my talk of buying an English grand-piano, I shall probably neither get that nor any other, and I need it less than I did, for my playing seems to me quite antiquated after hearing these modern wizards and acrobats, and I shrink back more and more into my nothingness.'

This discontent with herself appears to have lasted some time, for as late as July 13, 1837, Felix writes to his mother[1]:—

. . . I feel rather provoked that Fanny should say the new pianoforte school outgrows her. This is far from being the case; she could cut down all these petty fellows with ease. They can execute a few variations and *tours de force* cleverly enough, but all this facility and coquetting with facility no longer succeeds in dazzling even the public. There must be soul in order to carry others along with you; thus, though I might, perhaps, prefer listening to D-—— for an hour to hearing

[1] In Lady Wallace's translation.

Fanny for an hour, still, at the end of a week I am so tired of him that I can no longer listen to him, whereas then I first begin to enjoy hearing the other style of playing, and that is the right one. All this is not *more* than Kalkbrenner could do in his day, and it will pass away even during our day, if there be nothing better than mere execution; but this Fanny has, so she has no cause to fear any one of them all.'

Hensel had always wished some of his wife's compositions to be published, and after the success of the attempt already mentioned he urged her to go on. Her mother was of the same opinion, and begged Felix in the summer of 1837 to persuade Fanny to publish. The one success had not altered Felix's views about publishing in general, however, and he declined to persuade his sister; and Fanny, who had herself no desire to appear in print, and had yielded only to please her husband, readily gave up the idea. It was, however, resumed at a much later date, and carried out to a very small extent.

Towards the end of March Felix returned with the Jeanrenauds to Frankfort-on-the-Maine, and, the wedding having taken place, the young couple made a tour in the Upper Rhine and Swabia. The following letter will show the state of quiet happiness which became habitual with Felix under his wife's gentle influence.

Freiburg—im Breisgau: April 10, 1837.

. . . You will remember the time when we went through the pouring rain to the cathedral, and how we admired it and its dark stained-glass windows; but we could not then see the situation of the town, which is more beautiful than anything which I either remember or can imagine. It is all so peaceful and fertile, the pretty valleys, the hills in every direction, the villages fading away in the distance, the people so good-looking and so neatly dressed, the plashing mountain streams, and over all the first green of spring in the valleys below, and the last snow of winter on the hills above. You may fancy how lovely it all is, and that as we saunter about the whole afternoon in the warm sunshine, standing still now and then to look about and

talk over the past and the future, I may well say with true thankfulness that I am a happy man.

I intend to work very hard, and bring out a great many new works, and make real progress; but before I do that it is necessary to complete all the accumulation of unfinished music. This shall be my task for the summer, when I mean to carry out many old projects, and what I have not finished before winter I must lay aside. I composed at Spire three organ preludes, which I think you will like; a book of songs without words is nearly ready for printing, but I do not mean to publish any more of these just now, as I would rather write greater things. I have almost finished a string quartet, and shall soon begin another. I am in the right vein for working now.

We think of stopping here for at least another week, to make excursions in the surrounding country. We then return to Frankfort, probably by way of Heidelberg. If during our stay I catch sight of my old friends, the snow-mountains of Switzerland, I shall find it hard to turn northwards again: but this time we have no choice. Cécile wants some space left, and so I conclude.

The rest of the summer, up to the time of the Birmingham musical festival, was spent by 'the Felicians,' as Fanny used to call the couple, at Frankfort and Bingen. Felix had a great dread of this journey to England. He wrote to his sister, when recommending her to make a visit to the seaside:—

'If you dislike the idea of parting from Hensel, think of me, who must in a few weeks, though we have not been married four months yet, leave Cécile here, and go to England by myself—all, too, for the sake of a musical festival. Going to the seaside for your health is a very different thing! The festival will be nothing but business and excitement; it is to last four days, and already my work is cut out for me thus: the first day, playing the organ; the second, conducting "St. Paul"; the third, playing the piano; and on the fourth and last, the organ again. Moreover, they talk of producing my new psalm, "As the hart pants," and my Midsummer-night's Dream. Moreover, Neu-

komm has a new grand cantata of his own, "The Ascension"; moreover, several pieces from Bach's "Passion," with, according to report, new parts for the trumpets; moreover, the Italian singers will sing; moreover, there is the whole of the "Messiah"; moreover, each concert will contain a symphony and an overture; moreover, it lasts to September 22, and on the 30th I must be in my place at a rehearsal in Leipzig, for the first subscription-concert is on October 10. Gracious me! all this is no joke. But possibly the death of the King of England will intervene, and put a stop to the whole project.'

The contemplated event, however, did not happen, and Felix had to go. In all his letters of this period we find traces—sometimes openly expressed, sometimes alluded to—of an increasing dislike to 'performances' and conducting, and a growing desire to stay at home, engaged on his own work—composition. He had never at any time cared much for these outward demonstrations of success, and now, when his own home-life opened a new world to him, he felt more and more averse to such opportunities of public display, and grudged the expenditure of time and labour which they entailed. The Birmingham festival taxed his energies severely, but nothing could have been more successful. He was the true 'hero' of the festival, and concentrated on himself all the immense enthusiasm of which an English audience is capable. After these exciting scenes, 'which needed,' as Felix writes, 'the cold-bloodedness of a fish to stand them,' he had to travel back immediately. Taking only six days and five nights to Frankfort and Cécile, he went on with her at a more moderate pace, in three days, to Leipzig, where he arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon, and conducted the subscription-concert at six. 'The trombones and drums put themselves to such violent exertions that towards the end of the concert I was certainly somewhat "caput,"[1]' he writes to his mother. It is not to be wondered at if he longed for home and rest.

The sisters, it will be remembered, had not yet seen Cécile, which they both a little resented, especially Fanny, who thought that an opportunity might have been found sooner of bringing

[1] Knocked up.

her to Berlin. Towards the end of August the Woringen girls came to Berlin with the old President, and, the family being naturally anxious to repay them for their former hospitality, made the time as pleasant as they could. A great deal of good music was gone through, and the Sunday-music in particular assumed larger and larger proportions, both as regards the performers, the audience, and the character of the music. In fact, the whole thing outgrew its original aspect of a friendly gathering, for many of the visitors were total strangers brought by persons themselves only recently introduced, and the singers could scarcely find standing room, to say nothing of seats, so overcrowded did the rooms become.

With the exception of the Singakademie, none of the institutions for the execution of good music now so numerous in Berlin were in existence, and that venerable association never was in a hurry to include in its programmes unknown compositions, old or new.

After a pleasant stay of some weeks, the Woringens started for home, taking Leipzig on their way. On this occasion Fanny could not refrain from expressing her feeling of anger against the 'Felicians,' and even gave vent to it in her letters to them. Thus she wrote to Cécile on October 5, 1837 :—

. . . I am eagerly looking forward to Felix's concerto. Will it be printed soon, so that we may have it? When I see Felix's works for the first time in print, I look at them with the eyes of a stranger, *i.e.* criticise them without partiality ; but it always makes me sadly recall the time when I used to know his music from its birth. It is so different now, and what a pity it is that fate should have decreed that we are to live so far apart, and that he should have had a wife these eight months whom I have never seen. I tell you candidly that by this time, when anybody comes to talk to me about your beauty and your eyes, it makes me quite cross. I have had enough of hearsay, and beautiful eyes were not made to be heard.

However, like all such moods which are fostered by silence, and vanish directly they are expressed openly, Fanny's resent-

ment soon evaporated, and, yielding to the persuasion of the Woringens, she accompanied them to Leipzig, where she was at last to see the beautiful eyes of which she had heard so much, and which made as great an impression on her as they did on everybody else. When at home again, she writes to Klingemann: 'At last I know my sister-in-law, and I feel as if a load were off my mind, for I cannot deny that I was very uncomfortable and out of sorts at never having seen her. She is amiable, childlike, fresh, bright, and even-tempered, and I consider Felix most fortunate; for though inexpressibly fond of him, she does not spoil him, but when he is capricious treats him with an equanimity which will in course of time most likely cure his fits of irritability altogether. Her presence produces the effect of a fresh breeze, so light and bright and natural is she.'

This favourable impression seems to have been mutual, for Fanny writes to Cécile on November 21, 1837: 'The kind things you say to me, dear Cécile, have made me very happy, for seldom in my life have I been *more* anxious to make a favourable impression than I was on you; and your kind words, which I believe to be sincere, allow me to hope that this has been the case. . . . How I do look forward to a visit from you!'

The winter of 1837 was not an eventful one. Hensel finished a large picture, 'Christ in the Wilderness,' and Fanny played in public for a charity, about which she writes to Klingemann on February 27, 1838: 'Last week the fashionable world was in great excitement about a charity-concert—one of those amateur affairs where the tickets are twice the usual price, and the chorus is composed of countesses, ambassadresses, and officers. A woman of my rank was of course pressed to play, so I performed in public for the first time in my life, and took Felix's G minor concerto. I was not the least nervous, my friends being kind enough to undertake that part of the business for me, and the concert, wretched as the programme was, realised 2,500 thalers.'

In the spring of 1838 Paul and his wife went to Leipzig for the christening of Felix's first son, and Felix gave a promise to

spend some time at Berlin. This news was received of course with much pleasure, and Fanny writes:—

. . . Mind, Felix, that you do not forget my Bach, and, one thing more (Cécile, Albertine, Paul—who will remind him?), have you Moscheles's new Studies, and will you send them to me by Paul and fetch them back in person? I shall be so much obliged to you if you will. You will receive a special letter from me very soon about your headquarters during your visit to Berlin. The seven towns of Greece are fighting for you, and the two sisters, hitherto such friends, are in danger of becoming sworn foes on your account, as you will find out for yourself. Dear Felix, I have not composed a single note this winter, although for that reason, perhaps, I have played more than ever; but I scarcely remember what it feels like to be writing a song. Will it ever come back? or 'is Abraham well stricken in age?' But what does it signify? I am not a hen to cackle over my own eggs, and not a soul dances to my piping. Will you favour the people here by playing to them some Sunday? Or must I shut up shop during your visit? O children, how I look forward to having you! By that time the garden will be beautiful, and (please God) we shall enjoy life very much. Good-bye, dear brother and sister, with everybody's love.

They did indeed enjoy themselves, both in the house and the garden, with Felix and his family, during the greater part of the summer, and made as much as possible of the long-wished-for union. Hensel, however, had been absent since May 27, having gone to England with his pictures 'Miriam' and 'Christ.' He had a twofold purpose in view: his first object being to see the country in which the family, through Felix, Klingemann, and other friends, took so great an interest; and his second to make his own name known there.

The time was well chosen for the accomplishment of his first purpose. King William IV. had died the year before, and the coronation of Queen Victoria, then only eighteen years of age, having been delayed by various circumstances, took place during his visit to London, and gave him the opportunity of

seeing much that was interesting. For showing his pictures and finding an engraver—a special object with him—the moment was less favourable. The dealers in works of art especially would take no notice of any picture unless it had some reference to the great event of the day.

Hensel, although generally a lazy correspondent, wrote very communicative letters during this his first prolonged absence from home, and some extracts from them will be found interesting. The young queen expressed a wish to see his pictures, and the Gallery at Buckingham Palace was the place fixed upon for exhibiting them. Hensel writes: 'Fancy my consternation when, upon entering the gallery, I saw all the fine Rubens, Van Dyks, Rembrandts, etc., and found I had to place my productions in the middle of them! But there was no help for it, the ordeal had to be faced, and might prove instructive. As you know, I have always preached on the necessity for artists of a little salutary mortification, and moreover desired, though with fear and trembling, to see my own productions among those of the heroes of art. After arranging my pictures, I had half an hour left in which to look at the gallery; so after filling my mind with the best I could see, I came back to my own work, and did not spare myself any humiliation that might prove useful, well knowing that such an opportunity might perhaps never recur again. I did feel humiliated, but elevated at the same time, for I saw clearly that much had been already achieved, and that more was within reach, if God and good fortune give me time and opportunity.'

The picture of Miriam was purchased by the Queen, and the Duchess of Sutherland, having asked for a replica, which Hensel declined to paint, ordered another picture, in which one of the figures from the 'Miriam' was to be prominently introduced. Lord Egerton also ordered a large picture, the subject being Stanzas 21, 22, and 23 of the Third Canto of 'Childe Harold,' in which Byron describes the Duchess of Devonshire's famous ball at Brussels on the eve of the battle of Waterloo, and the Duke of Brunswick, who was killed, catching the first sound of the firing. These two pictures occupied Hensel during the next year.

He gives the following description of the coronation :—

London: June 28, 1838, Coronation.

All is over, and the Queen is crowned. I have just seen the fair young girl step forth from this gate,[1] and as she, in her mediæval costume, passed down the line of halberdiers, dressed in red, against the venerable gray walls, I could have imagined myself back in the Middle Ages. It was a very pretty picture, with just a touch of sunlight. May it be a good omen for her reign! I can write no more just now, for I have this moment returned, thoroughly knocked up; and, as it is half past six, I must dine quickly, and then pass the evening in loitering about among the people, of whom I mean to make a special study to-night.

29*th*.—London has been quite mad for a long time, but especially so yesterday, and to-day it is tired out and sleepy. According to a ministerial announcement, over 500,000 strangers had arrived, and even London, immense as it is, could hardly contain the influx of visitors. Lucky those who had secured some place of repose. However, in spite of all the accumulation of people, there has been no dearth. Long processions of enormous Irish oxen passed through the streets, and were all reduced to beef and eaten, some from the orthodox dishes and plates, some without any such luxurious inventions. Neither was the eye neglected, for whole forests and gardens arrived in London, the former to be used for decorating balconies, the latter for fair ladies to put in their hair and bosoms—indeed, I now believe in Shakespeare's walking forest of Dunsinane. It is said that flowers were sent even from Russia, and ice from all quarters where water was frozen—that is to say, from everywhere. It was pleasant to watch the preparations, but walking or driving were almost out of the question; and as I am *obliged* to drive a great deal, not knowing my way, it took me quite three times as long as usual to go anywhere. Indeed, all communication was as good as stopped, for everybody who did not wish to be considered a nobody was afraid of being seen pushing his way through the crowd. The carriages were rolling about at four o'clock yesterday morning (in London!!!) for the poor little

[1] The letter contains a sketch of Westminster Abbey as a vignette.

children of the aristocracy had been dragged from their beds and dressed that they might be safely delivered at their respective destinations before the crush began. At a quarter past seven I set out with Lady Sandon. We had excellent places in Westminster Hospital, close to the entrance to the Abbey. I had been between two bundles of hay, for the Benedicts had invited me to join them in Piccadilly, and meet Lablache, Grisi, etc., but I could not refuse Lord Sandon to escort his wife, as he himself was to go with the other Members of Parliament.

After we had spent some time in watching the ever-increasing crowd, of which I made a few sketches, the carriages of those peers and peeresses who were not in the procession arrived one by one. Some were hissed; others, as for instance the Duke of Wellington, loudly cheered. On the whole the crowd was well-behaved; but I saw the police, for the first time, act brutally, and that without any reason. The mass of people, pushed from behind, overflowed the boundaries set them, without being able to help themselves, whereupon the constables pulled out a few persons here and there by the collar, and pushed them in again at some other place, where, of course, they took up just as much room—in short, it was a very useless piece of meddling. The cavalry did much better when it was necessary for them to interfere.

From our privileged places we should have looked on very comfortably, if the scenes below had not occasionally been distressing. One lady with a green veil was carried away in a swoon over the heads of the crowd. A drunken woman, with bare shoulders and hair hanging down, tried to dance, and when the police attempted to stop her would shriek out nothing but the word 'coronation'; but a humorous neighbour succeeded in removing her by means of familiar jokes and rough boxes on the ear. So far as I have observed, there are more drunken women here than drunken men: it is incredible how much whisky they can swallow. For ourselves, we were not obliged to have recourse to that kind of refreshment, as coffee, tea, eggs, etc., were provided in the house. Later on, during the ceremony in the Abbey, we had a complete luncheon, beef, ham, jellies, ices, etc., for all of which we did not pay a penny, as it was included in the admission-card; no money

appeared at all, which gave the whole affair the aspect of a party: so, as it turned out, the coronation day cost me less than any other during my stay in London. At a quarter to twelve the procession began to arrive at Westminster Abbey, and by an hour later the whole had been absorbed in the cathedral. I need not describe the procession in full, as you will see it all in the papers, but will mention a few details. So, for instance, it was fine to see the good feeling of a whole nation break out in cheers when Marshal Soult appeared; that they were not in honour of the hero and former enemy, nor of the French nation, was sufficiently shown by the fact that General Sebastiani was allowed to pass unnoticed. The Austrian ambassador also was loudly cheered, and that probably not merely for the splendour of his attire, as he was equalled in that respect by the Belgian Ambassador, Prince de Ligne, who did not, however, create the same sensation. Nothing more brilliant, by the way, could be seen than all the beautiful horses with their rich harness, the carriages and grooms covered with gold embroideries, and the splendidly dressed people inside. All this, too, was encircled by the venerable gray buildings and the crowds of common people under the dull sky, which was only now and then pierced by sunbeams; at first, indeed, it rained. But when the golden, fairy-like carriage—supported by Tritons with their tridents, and surmounted by the great crown of England—drove up, and the graceful girl was seen bowing right and left—when at that instant the mass of people were completely hidden by their waving handkerchiefs and raised hats, while one roar of cheering almost drowned the pealing of the bells, the blare of the trumpets, and thundering of the guns, one had to pinch oneself to make sure that it was not all a dream out of the 'Arabian Nights.' Then fell a sudden silence—the silence of a church, after the Queen had entered the cathedral. I mixed among the crowd, walked up to the doorway of the abbey, and peered into the solemn obscurity; but my involuntary emotion was dispelled by a sense of the ludicrous, as I looked closely at their dressed-up modern cinquecento halberdiers, whose cheeks suggest beef and whose noses tell tales of whisky and claret. I was able to take a good look at the different groups,

and selected some for my sketch-book; indeed I have filled a small book entirely, marking all the time the great contrast between popular movements in England and in Italy. How different is a papal coronation or even a benediction at Rome! I found some very fine arrangements and effects of decorated balconies, roofs with women standing out against the sky, etc., and took note of all, in case I should ever paint an English Paul Veronese. There are peculiar atmospheric effects here to be found nowhere else, but they must be sparingly used, or one may arrive at the same point as the present English school.

When the firing of the first gun announced the moment of the coronation, I went back to Lady Sandon, and then we saw the whole procession move back again. I feel that the impression of this picturesque and poetical scene will remain with me for life; and if you had but been there I should not have had the wretched feeling which crossed my mind every now and then, nor have passed such a miserable evening as I did, with all the merry-making going on round me.

The family life at Berlin this summer was most pleasant, in spite of the wretched weather, which prevented the use of the garden and even of the garden saloon. Felix composed a good deal, while Cécile drew and painted; a companionship which Fanny used to call the 'double counter-point' of her own married life. Her thoughts were constantly in England or engaged in planning a journey to Italy, to be undertaken directly after Hensel's return. Her letters to him are full of this plan, and her exultation at the idea of at last accomplishing her long-cherished desire. Their quiet home-life was disturbed, however, by an epidemic of the measles, which spared neither old nor young. Felix and his family were frightened away from Berlin; while Hensel returned in equal haste, as Fanny announced to Klingemann on September 18, 1838:—

Only a few lines, dear friend, to announce Hensel's safe arrival. He was delayed for one day at Hamburg, and so arrived yesterday morning, and I need not describe our pleasure at meeting again after so long a separation. That the news of the

measles should have driven him in a panic to the steamboat was entirely out of my calculations, as I thought I had made his mind perfectly easy by describing the illness as light as it really was. But how true it is, and will ever be, that even in the most intimate correspondence you never can tell exactly what the effect of a letter will be—written words are so different from spoken ones. Our plans have now undergone the most mature consideration, and the result of all our balancings between what is good and what is still better appears to be, that we are to give up our journey to Italy this autumn, and instead spend next season in London. I intend to accompany Hensel, and so shall have the pleasure of meeting you and many other old friends again, and also of making the acquaintance of several delightful persons hitherto unknown to me. With regard to the latter, I am not unconscious of a trial awaiting me, as many of them must have formed an ideal of me far beyond what I can ever come up to. I am not given to self-flattery, and have, little as it may appear, a natural shyness, which will be increased by the consciousness that my husband's friends will be expecting to see a prophetess, or a heroine, and will behold a dwarf. I am quite aware that this is only the first impression, but you will agree with me that it is mortifying. I derive great pleasure from Hensel's drawings and interesting accounts of his visit to London, and I am quite in love with Countess D., and look at her heavenly face at least ten times a day—a confession in which you will recognise my peculiar disinterestedness, capable as usual of rejoicing that my husband should have so beautiful a sitter. Such beauty is, indeed, a rare and enviable gift of heaven. What a pity that such a gifted creature should be denied nearly all happiness in life!

Fanny to Cécile.

Berlin: October 9, 1838.

Dear Cile! I can only write these words to-day, to send my best wishes for your birthday to you, or rather to Felix, for your life is, I am sure, more precious to him than to yourself. I am obliged to go out and pay twenty-seven tiresome visits, having

to call among others on Fanny J., and invite her to dinner to-morrow. Is not that tiresome enough? So between three and four o'clock to-morrow, just the time you will be receiving this letter, we shall be entertaining two or three tedious guests, and drinking your health in pine-apple cup, you Sunday child. God grant you health and a long life; and if ever you should live to be a little old woman with a palsied head, even that will become you, like everything else you do. But it is time you should write to me; for *voilà la troisième fois* that I have knocked, and you have not said 'Come in.' Therefore I will not tell you much about the exhibition, especially as there is not much to say about it. I hope we may meet before our journey to England, to which I look forward with a mingled feeling of pleasure and alarm. London is too big for me. Good-bye, dear children, good-bye, and pardon this piece of stupidity folded, sealed, and addressed as a letter. I suppose it is the atmosphere of the stove, which is heated for the first time to-day, that makes me so dull. However, do write, and remember that kind fate has given you a sister-in-law, who to-day and ever calls herself your

Affectionate F.

Felix to Fanny.

October 11, 1838.

I am glad Hensel liked 'merry England.' I wish we could see the beautiful drawings which his books are full of, no doubt. So I hear you are going there together next year. It is a very sensible plan, for I am sure you will feel comfortable in the dear smoky old place.

It is a great drawback living so far from one another, for we not only have to resign each other's society, but all our surroundings and interests are different, and these exercise a great though unconscious influence upon us—an influence which acts differently, and has different results in each place. Now you have your charming exhibition, at which I would give a good deal to spend one morning, for we have nothing of the kind here. The same thing struck me with regard to Seydelmann, for, though he makes a great impression here, he was much more appreciated in Berlin, where he was so much better supported.

'Emilia Galotti' was performed yesterday, and I went to the theatre for the first time, but even his acting did not thoroughly please me, because the rest of the company were so poor. I thought of that delightful evening when we saw the same play together, and took Cécile away before the end, because I could not stand it. On the other hand, he can act the 'Robbers' here, which the king declines to allow in Berlin, and they say it is his best character. David gave me an hour's harangue upon it, book in hand. I am going to put an advertisement in the paper begging for a repetition, and he has given a half-promise of it already. To return—as far as music goes, we are better off here; and if you were with us now, as you were about this time last year, you would be much amused at all the proceedings.

We have new pianists, alas! for all the concerts up to Christmas, and among them are some queer specimens. Next week we have a competition of singers which is really quite alarming. Mme. Löwe from Berlin, and Mme. Botgorschek from Dresden, Mme. Shaw from London, and Miss Novello from Milan, all meet here and make the Gewandhaus their battle-field. Novello is coming, I believe, on purpose to play a trick on Shaw (a 'Shawbernack,' if I may take a leaf out of Hensel's book). She has written a lot of letters from Italy, leaving me to pay the postage, announces a concert two days after Mme. Shaw's first, and then goes on to Prussia.

At Mrs. Shaw's first concert we perform Beethoven's music to 'Egmont,' with recitations by Seydelmann, and little Möser plays. It puts me into a stew already to think of the evening. Professor Stenzel, Arnold Mendelssohn, Heinrich Beer, Emil Bendemann, the Frankfort merchants Mühlenfels, are all mixed up together.

Felix to Fanny.

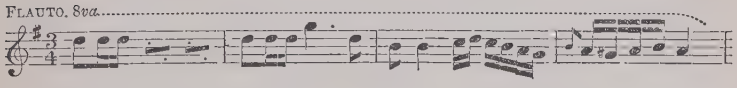
Leipzig: December 29, 1838.

. . . My third *étude* is a wretched piece, whether you play it ill or well; forgive me for sending it you, but I wanted to write something for you, and thus the evil came about (for, as you know, I do not care for Nos. 1 and 2 either). Well, you must give me credit for good intentions at any rate.

I inclose a letter to Mme. X. from the committee; to you, my dear Talleyrand, I will confide that it contains an offer of sixty thalers for the concert, my object being that you may assure her that there is no chance of our giving more, as she may want to bargain about it—a thing I hate. For this reason I am glad that the committee at once named a higher sum than they have ever given before, for our English singers receive less; besides, I do think she ought to be satisfied. When I read your letter about her to the committee, they were all enthusiastic about her. I remarked that after all one could not be certain as to her qualifications, but they replied, 'Ah!! your sister!!!'

Thalberg had a concert last night, and gave me the greatest pleasure. Try and hear him whenever you can, for, like everything perfect, he makes one set to work again with fresh spirit. His fantasias (especially the one on the 'Donna del Lago'), with all their astounding difficulties, contain the choicest and most delicate effects, every embellishment tells, for his exquisite taste is backed up by knowledge as well as by confidence. The strength of his wrists is incredible, and at the same time he yields to none in lightness and dexterity of finger. Mind you hear him often, for more exquisite virtuoso-playing it would be impossible to find. He does not pretend to be anything but what he is, a brilliant virtuoso, and the man who attains perfection in the line he has marked out for himself has accomplished all that can be desired.

Felix to Fanny.



is the bearer of these lines.

The sight of these notes will recall, I am sure, how father always brightened up at the name of Drouët, and how he would hum the above, or a passage from some of his other rondos, after dinner; also how we had to play to him as children eighteen years ago, and therefore no words of mine are necessary to insure a kind reception for the man with whom so many remin-

iscences are connected. I may add that I heartily hope he may give a crowded concert in Berlin, and I am convinced you can do a great deal towards bringing about such a result by letting him be heard beforehand; for he never plays without delighting his audience. I beg you to give him this opportunity, and in general to do all you can for him. In his straightforward simplicity he scorns newspaper articles and everything of the kind, so I wish him success, if it were only that his modesty may be rewarded, and 'that the nations may show themselves to be but men,' as King David says. But when you hear him play, his wonderful execution, refined virtuosity, enchanting tone, unerring certainty, and his composure, will explain better than words my anxiety for his success in Berlin, and you will see at once why I beg you to take him to your heart—figuratively, of course, or Hensel would stab me on the spot.

I am writing in great haste, and you shall have a better letter very soon. To-day I can only say this: receive Drouët kindly, think of the days gone by, enjoy him as I have enjoyed him, and keep the old place in your affection for

Felix M.

Extract from a Letter of Fanny to Klingemann.

November 30, 1838.

. . . My sister has lost her youngest child, a beautiful boy of thirteen months, and she herself has, before and after the death of the child, been suffering from such a severe though not dangerous complaint, neuralgia in the face, that it has required all our courage to witness her sufferings. I will spare you the details of all we have gone through during this trying time; Rebecca's intense bodily pain, which made her so delirious that she had to be held down in bed, took away the sharpest sting of her grief for the dear child, and she is quite resigned, calm, and gentle in her affliction. Our love too, the love of all her family, has given her much comfort. My dear husband took two drawings and an oil-painting of the dead child, and one of the drawings especially is so wonderfully like that it is a real

consolation to her. On the first news of the child's death Felix came over and stayed five days. Unfortunately Rebecca was too ill at the time to be able to enjoy his company, but his love and kindness did her much good. Her poor husband, too, has suffered much; but they have a real blessing in Dirichlet's mother, who is an excellent woman, and such an one as I have rarely met with.

Do not anticipate too much pleasure from our visit to London. I shall lay a terrible tax on your time, and hunt you about the town; for I must see everything, and you must help me. I am glad you give me credit for sufficient wisdom to be proof against disappointments, and I quite agree with you. If nothing worse happens to me than the non-invitation of the aristocracy (that is what you mean, is it not?), I will bless London three times over; for I have never cared for that sort of thing, and I am not going to begin now in my old age. I need not ask whether you, the Moscheles, and the Horsleys will receive me kindly, for that is a matter of course, and quite sufficient for me: I want no other acquaintance.

The picture for the Duchess of Sutherland took so long that the Hensels found themselves obliged to give up part of their plans, and so the visit to England was sacrificed, as that to Italy had been the year before. Fanny, according to a promise given to Rebecca during her illness, accompanied the latter to the seaside; and after that was realised the long-projected tour in Italy.

The sisters decided upon Heringsdorf as a seaside resort. This bathing-place on the Baltic had only just been 'discovered'; and it was with some reluctance that Fanny fulfilled her promise. The following letters will show that Heringsdorf, even then, was better than its fame.

Heringsdorf: July 1, 1839.

Fanny.—We have just come home from our first bathe, dear husband, and the Baltic proved no kinder than the German Ocean, for it gave us a sound thumping. We arrived yesterday morning, in weather like that of Boulogne memory, but notwithstanding this unfavourable beginning we were from the first

moment perfectly enchanted with the situation of the place. Our little lodgings are quite pretty, and the Devrients did not do them justice. That you may not think, especially you, dear mother, that we are living in a paper box, or even like the 'fisherman and his wife' in the fairy tale, I will tell you that after dinner I am going to Swinemünde to get a piano, if possible, and some furniture, of which we stand much more in need than we do of room. But it will not be easy, for the Princess Liegnitz is turning Heringsdorf upside down; she arrives to-day, and her train of cooks, lackeys, and inspectors has been upsetting the place since yesterday. Altogether we have had plenty of scope for our loyalty on the journey. On the steamer we met nothing but Russians, the retinue of the Grand Duke preceding him; he occupied six ships, and you may judge of the reputation the people bear, from the fact that their luggage was separated from that of the other passengers that it might be the more easily overlooked, for 'they steal like ravens,' as the people here say. The captain, the pilot, and the passengers abused them openly. Seriously, I want to persuade you to come here for a few days; the place is lovely, and will, I am afraid, not remain so long, for the curse of civilisation, with its green and yellow houses, is beginning to appear already, and the most beautiful spots will soon be spoilt. The best of the view here is that so far it is entirely unobstructed.

My drive to Swinemünde was successful, for I found an instrument which they are going to send to-morrow. I brought a chest of drawers back with me, and now we are comfortably settled. I am thankful to say that the first bathe has done Rebecca good, and I feel quite relieved on that point. I have invited the G.s from Swinemünde to coffee on Sunday afternoon; the B.s are coming also, and we shall have music, and the *fête* will be complete! I intend to christen a number of Felix's pieces and mine Thalberg, Liszt, Herz, and Bellini, to suit the taste of our guests.

I am at once humorous and sentimental, dear husband, just like a novel by Jean Paul—a state of mind I am firmly resolved to maintain. So far I have succeeded; but every time I think of you (and it does happen sometimes!) I feel inclined to cry.

Heringsdorf: July 3, 1839.

Rebecca.—It is really very generous of you, dearest husband, to write to me before you have had breakfast, and in your usual state of hurry; but even if you had not, I should have sent you more news to-day. Dear husband, had I known *how* lovely it is here, I should certainly not have dissuaded you from accompanying me, for the scenery seems as if made on purpose for you. How you would enjoy rambling about and lying under a tree, in some mathematical attitude, gazing at the sea, and making the greatest discoveries. It is quite the country for reflection, and, if even *I* feel it so, how much more would you! But it makes me melancholy to look at this idyllic village, with its modest thatched cottages, and think that within a few years the hand of man will spoil the charming little nook under pretence of improving it. Already I seem to see Belvederes taking the place of the storks' nests, lazy flower-gardens instead of corn-fields, and on the beech-hill a *café*, with its military band, while, worst of all, the bright, hard-working peasants will be changed into beggars. All this is in my mind's eye only, for as yet it is a little spot of earth fresh from the Creator's hand, and where the peasants also have created their own homesteads and fields. You would be charmed with it all; but what is the use of saying it now! Not only are you not here, but the distance between us is daily increasing. Thinking of it last night made me quite sad; but the monstrous nonsense M. produced, and which kept us up until the illegitimate hour of half past eleven, made me weep tears of laughter instead of sorrow. Well, October must come some day![1]

July 5, 1839.

Fanny.—Art is our great resource here; and you would not believe the delight we take in music. Yesterday the piano arrived. When it might be supposed to have recovered from the exertion of the walk upstairs, I tried it, but instantly

[1] Dirichlet had gone to Paris, where he thought of settling, but the idea was relinquished.

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a string smashed, and that note was dumb. For the last hour and a half, at least, a tuner has been sitting at it, and the longer he tunes the worse it sounds. He cannot put in a new string, and, as I perceive that they are all rusty, I shall use more strings here than needles. Moreover, it is a whole note too low, so we shall be able to sing high notes *ad libitum*. Three cheers for art! Again, it, the piano, makes an excellent table, and a first-rate book-case. I have just been into the next room, to ask Rebecca whether we had not better turn out the tuner. He has spoiled two strings besides mine, and the piano is now quite two notes too low. More to-morrow.

Saturday, July 6.—It is impossible for book or chronicle to describe the cannibalistic appearance M. presents early in the morning after bathing. I repeat, she looks a cannibal, and nothing but a cannibal. Over a gown of brown print she wears her favourite garment, a Kasawoika, with long hanging sleeves trimmed with ragged fur; these she draws through her belt, in deference to my request that she would fasten them up somehow to keep them out of our milk. I also begged her to tie up her hair, but she cannot relinquish the privilege of running about like a shaggy poodle or an unkempt savage till noon, as the other bathers do. Add black stockings and a red petticoat, kept in continual display by her graceful movements, and the picture is complete. We have agreed to give up coffee in the afternoon, for the sake of our noses, which would almost kindle a fire without the aid of matches. I am so tanned, too, dear husband, that a lemon held against my face looks white as a lily. Our *fête* to-day has lost its *pointe*, for yesterday's Cantor has succeeded in reducing the instrument to such a condition that it is impossible even to sing to it. We are, however, quite undismayed, and mean to try an artist from Swinemünde. The one yesterday was fetched from a neighbouring village by mistake.

The same.

Heringsdorf, July 17, 1839.

. . . We have made some very nice excursions. The day before yesterday we went to Swinemünde, and saw the

Russian frigate. I wish you had been with us, dear husband, for it was very interesting, and you, who are neither so anti-war-like nor so anti-Russian as I, would have carried away a less sad impression than I did. The first aspect when you come on deck is really imposing, and those who use their eyes without thinking cannot help enjoying themselves, as, indeed, most people do. When, however, one considers the science, the skill and industry, expended in creating, and the order, cleanliness, and regularity exerted in maintaining, this work of art—for the arsenal looks like a jewel-box, and every cannon might be a piece of drawing-room furniture—and then reflects on the purpose for which these noble faculties are employed—organised murder—it is enough to inspire with terror a person who had never known fear before. When supper-time arrived, and about a dozen fellows mustered round a kettle hanging from the ceiling, and gazed with their dull Slavonic faces into the gray broth they were going to devour, I assure you I was nearer crying than laughing! And yet they are not the lowest of the human species. A naval battle has always appeared to me the height of barbarism, and seeing a man-of-war has only strengthened this opinion. What civilised barbarians we shall appear to some wiser generation of the future that will have replaced war—the appeal to mere brutal force—by international tribunals! I do not say that wars will then be wholly impossible, but they will take the place that duels do now, and become daily more and more exceptional. When that time comes, people will have a right to talk about Christianity. I like Louis Philippe, because he is *le Napoleon de la paix*, and because he is going to try and settle the affairs of the world in a European Congress, which is a grand thought. You may laugh at my policy of peace, but I am right! Women always are : 'the pike is blue.' [1]

Yesterday we made an excursion into the forest, which might be called a parody on Felix's forest-*fête*,[2] for his table decorated with garlands was represented by a few ham sandwiches on a mossy stone, and his chorus of twenty experienced

[1] A reference to Gellert's fable, *Die Widersprecherin* ('The Contradicter').

[2] This refers to a letter from Felix describing to his mother a *fête* given in his honour at Frankfort (Felix's Letters, July 3, 1839).

singers by our little store of duets. The forest, however, was not part of the parody, for nothing could have been more beautiful. Our party was distinguished by the presence of two gentlemen (we were eight ladies and five children). On Sunday the *table d'hôte* was brilliant, for we had nineteen ladies, seven children, and three gentlemen, one being a little Jew dentist from Berlin, another a son of Böckh, and the third an unknown —not great, but big man.

Rebecca to Dirichlet.

. . . One charming peculiarity of this country is the impossibility of walking ten yards on level ground; hence arises a certain picturesqueness in every log of timber, and in each and all of the thousand and one objects which casually meet the eye, while from every green knoll, ascended without the slightest exertion, one has fresh views in infinite variety. The Baltic has been sadly calumniated: it is not tame, not wanting in colour. At this moment it is of the deepest blue, much deeper than the sky, and the waves with their white foam send the red into my cheeks. I am actually being blown right through by the most refreshing sea-breeze, for you must know that I am writing on the Acacia Hill at the back of our house; at my feet are the thatched roofs peeping from between the trees, and in the background is the dark forest on the Blue Hill (this is its name, not a poetical designation), the whole being bounded by the sea—a glorious sight! If you were but here to share it with me, and enjoy it all in the depths of your queer mathematical soul!

Eight months ago yesterday our dear child was taken from us. The human heart is like a grave; deep down lies grief, faithfully and firmly buried, and above it the green grass grows and the flowers flourish, but many a time it is torn open again and a fresh grief added, over which it closes again, and fresh flowers spring up, until at last—ah, there our wisdom ends! We are led by a higher hand. Well, you know the never-changing burden of my song: let me live with you, which means, write often how you get on. I do not think it is possible for husband and wife to be leading a more different life than you

are in Paris and I at Heringsdorf. The even tenour of my days flows on as monotonously as my letters. If Fanny were not longing for her husband, and I were not anxious to enjoy her society up to the last moment before her departure for her grand tour, I should not only *not* forward our leaving, but engage lodgings for the second season. But this is the best time, before the corn is cut, and while the green still keeps the freshness of spring.

The same to the same.

Berlin: August 7, 1839.

. . . I have yet to tell you about our last days at Heringsdorf, and will do so at once, tired and overheated as I am with travelling and unpacking. Our last experience was a king's birthday, such as you see described by the dozen in the papers —dinners, school-children, simple addresses, etc.—all extremely heavy and dull, except the illuminations in the evening, and they were magical. The scattered cottages among the hills and copses covered with lights and garlands of flowers, the starry vault above, the groups of gay holiday-makers, all made it a delightful evening. We stayed out on the Beech Hill I have mentioned so often long after all the people had gone and the lights had been extinguished, watching the moon rise over the sea, and—admire us—the next morning by half past three we were on the same spot again, to see the sun rise. On Sunday evening after the long calm we had fine breakers again, and I could not resist the temptation, so Antonie and I left the tea-table and plunged into the water, letting a few waves dash over our heads, and then, with dripping hair, sat down again to tea.

At Stettin we had three hours in which to pack and dine, and we had just time left to play a very naughty traveller's trick, for which you would have scolded me well if you had been there; but having done it, I will confess. We heard a delightful tenor voice singing just opposite, so Fanny and I went to our window and listened. When he had done, I thought it would be only fair to let him hear something too, so we sang a duet out of the window—we are well up in our duets just now, from having

sung so many at Heringsdorf. The windows opposite filled with people, and we were much applauded, whereupon our tenor began to sing again, but by that time our horses had come, and we did not hear the end. Perhaps he is singing still.

I say nothing of my feelings as I stood in your empty room, and among my dear pictures—you can imagine them. Well, it all has to be borne and endured. Whether we are in joy or in sorrow, time passes remorselessly on. This journey, at any rate, has been prosperous, and I had left off believing in the possibility of such a thing.

ITALY.

'God grant us a prosperous journey, without accident and with constant good news from home, and bring us back again to find no changes, and then we shall have a glorious time. I look forward to this great event with quiet happiness. May it be a good omen! Amen.' With these words Fanny concludes the last chapter of her diary before starting on the journey to Italy.

Their first stopping-place was Leipzig, whither Felix had just returned from Frankfort, and whence he wrote on August 21:—

Dear Fanny,—We all arrived here yesterday evening in good health and spirits, and a load is off my mind, for Cécile has borne the exertions of the journey extremely well, and is in splendid health after it. I felt as if I had nightmare the whole way, but thank God it is over now, and we found everything here as unchanged and as lively as we were ourselves. The S.s met us on the road, and got into the carriage, while I walked. Verhulst, too, came to meet us a long distance from the town. But do you know Verhulst? You will be glad to make his acquaintance when you come. And now, dear Fanny, when may we expect you? You must stay a long time, for on such a journey as yours, when one measures time by the bushel, you may well give us a little without grudging it.

I am writing early in the morning and in haste, as later on I shall hardly have a moment to spare. I have seen neither Schleinitz nor David, nor anybody else in Leipzig yet, and you can fancy how many thousand stories have to be told, and how much there is to talk about—all England with David, and all Saxony with Schleinitz. Please inquire about Mr. Julius Stern of Berlin, who has sent me a book of songs with a kind note,

which I found on my arrival yesterday. From the first glance I should think the songs show talent, but I have neither seen nor heard anything else about him.

We calculated yesterday that we ate something at every station throughout our journey, excepting Neuhof and Marksuhl, where nothing was to be had. When I add that a sausage, bread and wine, and sweetmeats were put into the carriage-bags at Frankfort, you may imagine that we did not suffer from hunger. The journey took us four days, as we slept last night at Weimar; but the little one was a pattern of goodness in the carriage, and only got one slap the whole way. He screamed frightfully then, but soon fell asleep, and when he awoke kissed me as tenderly as if he had not been slapped, and I had not been the party who slapped him. Well, thank God, we are safe home, and I am very glad. May we soon have a happy meeting, dear Fanny!

The Hensels were so comfortable in the cosy home at Leipzig, where they spent a week, that Fanny always considered their departure from Leipzig the beginning of their journey. Felix was now thoroughly happy, both in his position and in his home-life, and this state was favourable to a large amount of work of different kinds. The 95th and 114th Psalms, the overture to 'Ruy Blas,' the Sonata in D major for piano and violoncello, the string quartet in E flat, the Serenade and Allegro Giocoso for pianoforte and orchestra, and many songs with piano accompaniment, were produced during the years 1838 and 1839. Moreover, he was beginning to think of 'Elijah,'[1] as a letter to Schubring of November 2, 1839, shows. The Hensels left Leipzig on September 4. Unfortunately they were persuaded by interested innkeepers to try a new route to Bamberg, but they encountered the proverbial fate of those who try short cuts, for the new route was not only longer, but in such an unfinished state that they frequently had to take to the fields. Again, when they reached the Maine, one pitch-dark night, they found the ferry-man, like the rest of the world at that time,

[1] 'Elijah' was finished in the year 1846.

asleep in bed; but the postilion declaring the river was shallow enough to be forded, and the only other alternative being to remain in the carriage all night on the bank, they resolved on the adventure, and accomplished it in safety.

By way of Bamberg, Nuremberg, and Augsburg they reached Munich. Bavaria was then a most interesting country, especially for an artist, as King Ludwig did much to encourage the fine arts, and under his rule many noble works were produced, as well as a few conspicuous failures. At Augsburg the cathedral, restored and cleared of the trashy additions of later centuries, made a grand impression upon them, and Nuremberg, of course, was fully appreciated. Their first specimen of King Ludwig's own creations was the Walhalla, as yet unfinished, about which Fanny writes :—

About half an hour from Ratisbon on the left bank of the Danube, the Walhalla stands in a commanding position on the top of a fine eminence, surrounded on all sides by well-wooded hills, with villages and ruins. When finished, the building, with its enormous marble colonnades distinctly defined against the sky, will be undoubtedly magnificent; but parts of it we do not like, and there is a striking incongruity in the idea of a Greek temple being called Walhalla, and destined to receive the busts of celebrated Germans. At present you see nothing but a colossal scaffolding of boards, which, being on a hill so near the water, irresistibly reminds one of Noah's ark. From the inside one can form some idea of what it will be like, especially with the aid of a little engraving we had given us. The hasty and superficial way in which they deal here with even great undertakings will be best imagined from the fact that a single Caryatid by Schwanthaler has been copied fourteen times, because he could not be allowed time to model different ones. Indeed, the whole of Bavaria is but one large box of bricks, with which the fanciful child living in Munich amuses himself as he likes. The only fear is that when the child is gone the beautiful many-coloured houses may fall down, and it must strike everybody that too much is being undertaken in proportion to the means of the country and the culture of the people.

But it cannot be denied that the king is a grand man in his way, and shows knowledge and sense. He is the best and cleverest of ministers of public buildings (*Oberbaudirektor*), and, as he has also a handsome allowance as King of Bavaria, he is able to carry out all his fancies, whether in buildings, painting, or sculpture. He behaves handsomely and kindly too towards the artists so long as they work fast enough, and in this manner many wonderful things are brought about; indeed, it requires some effort to refrain from envy at the sight of energies so taxed, and responding so readily to the strain. His predilection for the Gothic style has given a fresh impulse to the arts connected with it, and in painting on glass, carving in wood and stone, and masonry, his subjects are now on a par with our ancestors.

At Munich they became personally acquainted with all the artists—Schwanthaler, Hess, Schnorr, Cornelius, and Kaulbach—and were much interested in the bright and busy atmosphere in which they lived. They also derived great pleasure from a musical acquaintance, Delphine Handley, mentioned in Felix's letters from Munich as Delphine Schauroth. Hensel took sketches of many interesting people, and altogether their stay at Munich was very gay and pleasant.

The next few days brought them within sight of the sublimest mountain-scenery, as they crossed the Stelvio, the highest and grandest of all Alpine passes.

Fanny to her Mother.

Bormio, at the foot of the Stelvio, on the Italian side.
September 27, 1839.

We left Berlin just a month ago, and to-day we have accomplished our passage over the highest road in the Alps. We had a delightful journey of four days through the Tyrol, favoured by exceptionally fine weather, for the cold and rain of the latter part of our time at Munich was succeeded by blue skies and cloudless sunshine.

Milan, September 30.—On Tuesday, the 24th, we left Munich in rather doubtful weather, which, however, cleared up

completely after a few slight showers, and, passing through a beautiful and interesting country, arrived at the foot of the mountains. The next morning we started at sunrise, the moon being just opposite the sun, and the sky brilliantly clear, and the first objects that met our eyes were the snow-mountains of Tyrol, towards which we were driving. Not far from the frontier is Hohenschwangau, an old castle which the Crown Prince of Bavaria has restored in feudal style. The side by which we approached it is flat, with low hills in the distance, the country rich in green pastures and beautifully clear lakes. On the other side of the castle-crowned hill is a splendid Alpine lake, with swans that look like floating stars on the dark-green water, and beyond these are several chains of mountains, rising progressively higher. A convenient road leads up to the castle, and the very lamps and lamp-posts are Gothic; indeed, you would never imagine *how* Gothic it all is. You may, perhaps, remember that Domenic Quaglio designed all the furniture down to the smallest chair, and died in the castle. The walls of all the rooms are painted in wax, and the Crown Prince has had the impartiality to choose the history of the Swabian Emperors for one room, and that of the Guelphs for another. However, joking apart, though it is rather irresistible, all is carried out very well, and in good taste, decidedly better than in Prince Frederic's castle on the Rhine, and the view from the windows, which command four lakes of an entirely different character, is delightful. Shortly afterwards you cross the Austrian frontier, over which we passed unmolested by means of a florin, and the same day we went on to Finstermünz, over an important pass, which opens the road to Italy, as from thence you can get to Botzen without having to cross any more mountains. This pass vividly reminded me of the St. Gothard. The splendid road bordered by rocks is a steep ascent the whole way, with the Inn roaring far below; just at the most romantic point it suddenly turns into the mountains, just as at the Urner Joch, but instead of the Devil's Bridge you pass a fortress built by the Austrians on and in the rock, and then emerge on a quiet green plateau, just as at Ursern; the stream, hitherto so turbulent—there is a waterfall shortly before

you reach the fortress—now flows along as quietly as a Tyrolese river can, for they all seem to consist of champagne instead of water. After driving for some time along this plateau, we saw a gigantic mass of snow-mountains in front of us, and when we were informed that this was the Stelvio with the new road we were to traverse, I confess that my heart sank. We slept at the foot of the mountains, and started at half past five the next morning for our day's task, with a cloudy sky, and a mist which kept us for the first few hours in uncertainty about the weather. I will try to give you as good an idea as I can of this remarkable road. The ascent on the Tyrolese side comprises three stages of about five German miles, each being of a totally distinct character from the others. During the first, the road all the while ascending considerably, we drove straight on into a narrow valley, continually crossing the wild mountain stream, and getting ever higher and higher, as we approached the snowy wall that shuts in the valley. Real Alpine scenery, pastures with cattle, chalets, rocks, and mountain streams spread out before us. Trafoi, the first resting-place, is 5,000 feet high, and here we were at the foot of the Stelvio itself. From this point the road is no longer straight, but climbs zigzag up the steep mountain. Seen from below, the railings at the side look like the espaliers of an immense vineyard, and you may often see twelve windings at once. The second resting-place is called Franzenshöhe, and touches the snow-line. Here we were surrounded on all sides by glaciers and wide snow-fields, and could see the Ortlerspitz from top to toe quite near, while the green valley beyond passed out of our sight. We had still another mile to drive through the snow, but the weather was so beautiful and the sun so bright that instead of piling on the rugs, fur gloves, shawls, and other wraps with which we had provided ourselves, we even took off our cloaks. The air was delightfully fresh, without being at all cold. On this latter part of the road are innumerable strong wooden roofs, under which travellers may shelter from the avalanches, and which also serve to protect the road. At last, after more than ten hours of uninterrupted uphill work, we safely reached the summit, 'Santa Maria.' Here we drank the

last drops of the Hungarian wine, your gift, dear Rebecca, to the health of all our loved ones, wherever they may be, and then down we went merrily in two hours, as great a distance as that which it had taken us more than ten to ascend. I have never seen anything so wild and deserted-looking as this summit of the Stelvio, with nothing but rocks and snow far and wide. The driving down is delightful. A drag was put on one of the wheels, and we rolled down safely and swiftly along the admirable road, with not a stone or an obstacle of any kind to hinder us.

Here we saw the source of the Adda, which is from its birth most active and vigorous, and forms several splendid waterfalls. Here also are the wonderful galleries blasted in the rocks; there there were six or eight of them, and in most we counted ten or twelve openings through which you may see the view. I cannot tell you how interesting it is to pass through all these different stages, the bare rocks and eternal snow, the pines, the deciduous trees, and then all the loveliness of the fertile valley. Thoroughly delighted with our day's work, we arrived at Bormio, just as darkness was setting in, and there I began this letter.

I have given rather a detailed description of this pass, because I am sure it is not so generally known as most things about which I shall have to tell you later on.[1]

We were particularly fortunate with regard to weather, for it began to rain when we started from Bormio the next morning, and poured incessantly for three days, which would have been most disagreeable on the pass, though in the plain it seemed a kind of rest from the constant looking and admiring. In the valley of the Adda we found great devastation, caused by a hurricane a fortnight ago; the road had been torn up in various places, and bridges and houses were utterly wrecked. The road had been entirely restored, and the bridges replaced by temporary ones, but still the sight filled us with awe. On the morning of the 29th we reached the lake of Como, and here for the first time I beheld Italy, so familiar from the rapturous descriptions of others, and yet so surprising! We had already

[1] I publish the description entire, because crossing the Alps in sunshine will soon be a thing of the past, a more enlightened age preferring to burrow under them in the dark.—AUTHOR.

seen olive, chestnut, and mulberry-trees, but hitherto the character of the country had been distinctly Alpine. Here, however, it suddenly undergoes a complete change. At Varenna, where we stopped, the hotel is close to the lake, and you look across the soft, delicate light-green water to the beautiful mountains with their varied outlines. Neither are rocks and snow missing from the landscape, but they modestly keep in the background, leaving the first place to gentle loveliness. In the foreground was a garden, with lemon and orange-trees, loaded with blossoms and fruit, large fig-trees, roses, and gigantic aloes growing out of the walls, all this stupendous vegetation covering a series of terraces, the last of which leads down to the lake. A slight drizzle did not of course prevent our going down to the garden, and the charm of the landscape was scarcely marred by the clouds. I cannot describe how happy I felt and how touched, for touching is the epithet best suited to the beauty of this country. I felt as if I were undeserving of it all, and longed to have you all with me. You, dear mother, would need Faustus's cloak to carry you home again in the evening, or you would find it too fatiguing; but *your* next journey, dear Rebecca, must be to the Italian lakes, even if you cannot manage the whole of Italy; this country would exactly suit you, and is in itself worth seeing. Milan is quite near too. And as for figs! I assure you, I never eat the luscious fruit which melt on one's tongue without longing to be able to pop one into your mouth also. And grapes! well, I think they were meant for me, for nobody likes them better than I; but they are quite renowned here, and one gets them for less than nothing! The peaches do not answer my expectations, all I have come across as yet being hard and not fit to eat.

The road by Lake Como is again a splendid one; the edge here, however, is protected by granite walls instead of railings, and the galleries have openings like irregular gateways, from which you catch the most charming vistas, instead of mere apertures to admit light, such as those in the galleries on the pass. It was impossible to reach Milan by daylight, and, as we did not like to lose the first impression, we remained at Monza for the night. I cannot imagine what Lucia was about, running

from one convent to another and ringing the bells. Renzo,[1] too, must have been drunk, as he was that time in Milan, for the screaming and shouting in the streets was as bad as the pealing of the bells. Monza is an interesting old place, with a cathedral —the outside of which is very beautiful, but the inside entirely spoilt—and a palace of Frederic Barbarossa's, which they are going to pull down soon. My husband means to tell the King of Bavaria, in the hope that he will interfere in behalf of the venerable building. Monza ought to belong to him, for he would find means to restore the cathedral.

It is *écrit là haut* that we are to make no acquaintances in Milan, for all the people to whom we have letters of introduction are absent. Now a town without people (I can do better without them in fine scenery) is to me a body without a soul; and therefore my recollections of Milan will not be brilliant. We have already 'devoured' the cathedral, the Brera, and the Scala, for a traveller has indeed a maw like an ostrich—nay, it is a gulf, an abyss. My letters in future shall contain a separate column, headed 'Italian life,' and this is the first paragraph: So far: beggars none; fleas few; dirt up to both ears. And yet in outward appearance Milan is one of the cleanest of towns. I shall be able to tell you more about it by the time we leave: at present I am too new in the place. As regards the language, I take all possible pains, reading all the signboards in the streets and gleaning information from the laundress and the waiter.

At Munich we spent a few pleasant evenings, one being at Mme. Handley's. She really plays splendidly, and I have never heard Felix's first concerto played so well, except by himself; moreover, she is a charming person. The last evening we improvised a tea-party *chez nous*, our guests being Prand and his wife, Rottmann, Marggraf from Berlin, and Kaulbach and his wife, the two latter of whom we met that evening for the first time. How that happened you shall hear by-and-by, but at present I will only tell you that when we parted it was with as much cordiality as if we had known each other for years. He is a tall, slender man, with an interesting face, high, bald forehead, pale complexion, and rather long hair. The same description

[1] This of course refers to the characters in the *Promessi Sposi*.

will do for his wife, who is very pretty. He is extremely kind, takes an interest in everything, and looked over the sketch-books with the liveliest attention, making noises just as Schadow does. He is witty too, and chaffed honest Rottmann in the most comical manner. When Wilhelm had taken Rottmann's portrait and was going to add the shadow, Kaulbach begged him to leave that to him, and then drew in it Rottmann's profile, with the enormous nose, which has procured him the nickname of *il nasone*. Rottmann himself wrote under it—

Hoho, da ist sie ja,
Wie sie der Spiegel wies,
Die ungeheure Nase,
Die sich so oft schon stiess.[1]

And so that sketch has turned out quite a joke. At the request of the company I played as well as I could, but the instrument was rather out of tune. The conversation was very lively, and the evening altogether as pleasant a one as I ever spent. Upon the whole Munich left a very favourable impression upon me, for we made the acquaintance of some pleasant people, and the works of art, even the ancient ones, bear a kind of stamp of actual life, for you see that they are cared for and understood, which enhances their value. Long life to the King of Bavaria, *quand même*!

At Padua, 'which left a disagreeable impression of decay,' the church of St. Antonio and the Scuola di Tiziano, a room painted in fresco, with miraculous scenes from the life of St. Anthony, are worth seeing. Fanny remarks: 'A painting, said to be by Titian, representing St. Anthony making an infant speak, is very pretty. The miracles of this saint are all of a practical kind, and when I turn Roman Catholic he shall be my patron. He resuscitates defunct glasses and plates, and this, you know, would be useful to a housekeeper. We also went to the Chapel, in which Förster cleaned (years ago) the paintings by Jacobo d'Avanzi; the dirt he washed down may still be seen there, and the tables he used are still standing one on the top of the other. 'They are a nation of pigs.'

[1] Ha, ha! you here behold
The mighty monstrous nose;
Whichever way he hold it,
It meets with hits and blows.

Letter to the Family.

Venice: October 13, 1839.

On my leaf in the book of fate is an entry, stating that in the year 1839, on October 12, at two o'clock in the afternoon (by our watches) I should behold Venice for the first time from the mouth of the Brenta as we turned into the lagunes, and then enter this wonderful island-city, this republic of beavers. As you like hearing about our travels, I hasten to let you share our enjoyment as much as possible. I do not remember in my whole life to have felt so much astonishment, admiration, emotion, and joy in any twenty-four hours as I have in this wonderful city of Venice, and my eyes have hardly been dry a moment since we arrived, so enchanting is it all. As one first approaches and sees it floating upon the water, one scarcely knows which to admire most, its grandeur or its fairy-like beauty. But when you get into the first streets, all of water, and see other streets branching out right and left, nothing but the sight of shirts and aprons prosaically hanging out to dry from all the houses in the suburbs could convince you that you are not dreaming. Directly after dinner we left our bad hotel (one much recommended to us at Munich) and walked about for some time on the quays, and in the narrow streets, and I then experienced for the first time the peculiar effect produced by seeing in reality what one has long been familiar with in pictures. The church of St. Mark, the Doge's palace with the two columns in front, the Rialto, the Bridge of Sighs, etc., did not seem new, but old friends, only superior to my recollections of them. But what most surprised me was the life in the city, the bustle almost like that in Paris, the number of shops and *cafés*. I had expected to find here the same kind of splendid decay that there was in Padua, which really is a mouldering town, but here everything was alive and in the freshest of health! This morning by nine o'clock we had engaged an open gondola, and began our sight-seeing in a state of high-pitched expectation. First of all we went right across the harbour to the Island and church of St. Giorgio, where there are

some fine pictures inside, but the finest of all outside, in the view of a city which is quite unique. Thence we went to Sta. Maria della Salute, at the entrance of the Grand Canal, where we saw several paintings by Tintoretto, and some by Titian. Then on to the German painter Nerly's, a specially interesting visit to me, because he has the same studio in the Pisani Palace in which poor Leopold Robert died. It was very affecting to see his room and walk up the staircase he used, after reading the details of his life and death in the little biography. Next to the Academy, which is the building Goethe describes in such glowing terms under the name of Carità; here we walked up the staircase he speaks so much of. The collection of paintings, however, can scarcely have been there in his time, or he surely would have said something about it. One is the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, which you know from the engraving; it does not do justice to it, but I feel powerless to describe this wonderful picture. Moreover, there is a considerable number of other paintings, interesting in their way, but after seeing that one first (and it is always shown first) you have to come down again to be able to appreciate the others, even the rest of the Titians. When one has returned to a more ordinary state of mind, there is a good deal to enjoy in the picture of little Mary in the Temple by great Titian—indeed, it is really delightful, with a touch of Dutch *naïveté* in the conception. There are some large, brilliant pieces by Paolo Vecchio (whom we always call Uncle Paul now), and some scenes with a background taken from old Venice, by Bellini, both exceedingly interesting. There is a great deal more than we could even look at to-day; it is quite too much to take in all at one visit. I must mention that the pictures and building are beautifully kept—a rarity in Italy, where it is generally distressing to see the state of neglect in which the greatest treasures of architecture and painting are allowed to remain. Padua outdoes other places in this respect, and I cannot tell you how the town disgusted me. I am obliged to confess, having had a guide who could read and interpret hieroglyphics (*vide* Goethe), that there is much that is beautiful to be seen there, but the actual sight afforded me little pleasure. Our next gratification

was addressed neither to the eye nor to the ear, being nothing less than a feast of oysters, with which we recruited ourselves for further exertions. Then we went to the Pisani Palace, which contains but one painting, Paolo Veronese's splendid picture of the Family of Darius before Alexander, of which you have often heard my husband speak. The owners of the palace, by taking the trouble to walk a few steps on their balcony, can see the whole of the Grand Canal from one end to the other. The Barbarigo Palace has about twenty Titians, all in a sad state of decay, whilst the Pisani bears an imposing aspect of old-fashioned grandeur. When walking down the staircase I almost fancied myself a noble Venetian, for I assure you one feels by no means one of 'the people' there. We ended our morning's work by going to see Aurel Robert, who still occupies the lodgings he shared with his brother—their studio was elsewhere—and thus completed the touching picture of his surroundings. Aurel showed us his drawings from his brother's pictures, and several unfinished things. This was a morning in Venice! Include in your imagination a brilliant sky, the mildest possible air, the pleasant gliding motion of the open gondola over the bright-green water sparkling in the sunshine, and you will agree with me that it is only in Venice that such a morning's enjoyment is possible. One cannot help wanting all whom we love to enjoy it too. Paul, I believe, needs little persuading, for he is certain to bring Albertine here some day; but for Dirichlet it is more difficult, and I am speculating already as to how they could best arrange a journey here some day in the future. Rebecca *must* see Venice—it is exactly the place to suit her.

I wrote so far in the afternoon, while my husband went out again. At seven he came to fetch me, and we went to the Piazza, where a band was playing in the middle of a dense crowd. Under the arcades were a great number of beautiful and elegantly dressed ladies, whom I inspected thoroughly, and then we went to the Piazzetta, where we could see the moonlight on the water. Here were gathered people of a lower class, the attraction being a permanent fair, with a marionette theatre, and the usual quarrels, fights, shouting of vendors, and singing—by no means bad of its kind, for a bass and soprano sang a duet

correctly and with taste, accompanying themselves on a violin and guitar. By nine o clock, what with the military band and its drums, the loud talking, the crying of children, and the general confusion, the noise became maddening. As soon as I got home I discovered that I had lost my brooch, and my husband hastened back to look for it in spite of my remonstrances, and absolutely found it on the Piazza. Was it not lucky?

I ought now to give you an account of our six days' journey from Milan to Venice, with stoppages at Crema, Brescia, Desenzano, Verona, Vicenza, and Padua, but in most cases I refer you to Goethe, who really describes it all almost as well as I could—so little is changed in these parts. I can give you no better idea of the architecture of Palladio, whom Goethe admires so much, and from whose designs half Vicenza and the greater part of Padua and Venice were built, than by saying that it reminded me very much of the works of Schlüter; some of the buildings here, especially the arsenal, are so like, that Vicenza did not look at all strange to me. It is most interesting to read Goethe's descriptions with the reality before us; though it is more than fifty years since he was here, all his remarks are as true and as fresh as if he were writing of to-day.

What you say about the daguerreotype interests us very much; please keep us *au fait* in this important matter.

Extract from a Letter of Fanny's to Cécile.

Venice: October 20, 1839.

We were just starting for our second visit to Titian's Assumption, when we received Felix's letter, advising us to see it often. I gave his message to the 'glory,' and now assure him that I for one have nothing in common with the blockhead who does not admire two or more cherubs' heads.[1] The wreath of children is one of Titian's finest creations, and Titian himself is certainly one of God's finest creations; when, therefore, God and Titian combine to do their best, the result may well be worth seeing

[1] Felix's Letters, September 14, 1839.

How pleasant it will be to have long talks about Venice with Felix! There is no occasion for him to call himself a grain of pepper, or a brewer's horse either, for I like the presentation of little Mary in the Temple, with the torso in the walls, the woman selling eggs at the side, and the beautiful beggar woman behind; also the Entombment; the sweet impassioned cither-player, too, I like even better. Neither are the three heads by Giorgione in the Manfrini gallery at Canareggio at all bad; also I have appreciated the gondolas, and I hope to know Venice pretty well by the time we leave it. There was a moon down in the calendar, but unfortunately most of the evenings were too dark for rowing about in gondolas.

October 23.

Yesterday we took a manly resolution and left our Luna (the hotel), which my husband says is not a *casta*, but a dirty Luna; we have moved to apartments in Robert's house, where for the first time in Venice we slept well, and were not molested by mosquitoes. I am hardly fit to be seen, for both my eyelids are swollen, innumerable bites cover my neck and face, and my hands look as if they were tattooed. Robert has taken great pains to find models for Wilhelm, and now he really has a choice of them, and is going to begin a head to-day. You asked me the other day whether the Italian cookery agrees with me, and I answer pretty well on the whole; the roasts are served without gravy, but their Stuffati and Umidi and all the rest of their stews I like very well, and the cheese eaten with all the soups is excellent. The soups themselves, however, are very monotonous, for there are only three varieties: rice, maccaroni, and vegetable soup, *voilà tout*. The bread and the butter are excellent, and till now I have everywhere found the first indifferent and the second scarcely fit to eat, so that I have done without it. Another excellent thing is a very small kind of biscuit, which they call *Invisibili*. The Venetians eat no vegetables, except a bad kind of cabbage. The pears are excellent, and the wine good, but inferior of course to that of the *terra firma*. They generally leave thick dregs in the coffee, and whenever that is the case I take to pastoral life and drink

milk. Until we came to Venice I constantly refused wine, though all Italians recommend you to mix it with your water; but as we had at first to pay the usual tribute to the climate, Sebastian and I have resolved to drink it while we are here only, afterwards we shall return to water. I should mention, too, that we still have delicious strawberries.

October 28.

The long period of glorious weather came to an end a few days ago, and to-day we have a fire, after being uncomfortably cold for several days. I hope we shall find it warmer on the Continent, especially as we go further south, than it is in this fish-tub; it is really high time to be going into winter quarters. We always spend an hour in the evening at the *café*, drinking tea and reading the papers, which do not bring very pleasant news from Germany. The princes still go on conspiring against their subjects, and where it will lead to nobody knows. The small sovereigns are the worst of all. It seems quite strange, with one's mind full of such unpleasant subjects, to go out in the lovely evening and walk about the Piazza, which is really the finest open space in the world. We visited the Academy again the other day. There are nearly four hundred paintings still unhung for want of space, and a new room is being built. A dozen other galleries might be furnished with the pictures hung too high to be seen. Among them are some interesting curiosities—for instance, Titian's first and last painting side by side. The first, an Annunciation, shows promise of future greatness; but the latter—strangely enough, a dead Christ, with mourning disciples—is almost dreadful in colour and composition. Bellini's pictures are also very interesting, as they represent Venetian ceremonies, with views of Venice in the background, and, like Krüger's 'Parade,' are full of portraits, which, though of course unknown, one fancies one recognises. That *our* public should still continue to admire these very smooth portraits is another sad proof of want of taste, and the whole exhibition this year[1] is very annoying. You will like a study Wilhelm has made of a Venetian woman with the white veil they all wear. To-day

[1] Their letters from Berlin were full of complaints about it.

he is taking a coloured crayon sketch (for your book, dear Minna) of a very pretty woman carrying water.

Diary.

On November 3 and 4 we occupied ourselves in taking leave of our favourite haunts, and in spite of dirt and bad weather the old charm of Venice made itself felt. At one o'clock on the 4th we started, packed the carriage we had left at Mestre in the pouring rain, and drove on to Padua. The next morning, the rain still continuing as bad as ever, we made our way by lovely Monselice, and across the Adige, already considerably swollen, to Rovigo, an uncomfortable little place, where we dined. Here we were met by bad news; the Po had risen, and the ferry, the only means of transit, was said to be impracticable. We were not, however, to be deterred from making the attempt, and drove on in the afternoon to the river's edge, three miles. Here the distressing spectacle of a great inundation burst upon us, and it really looked as if the flood-gates of heaven were opened for a second deluge. At last we reached the Po. The ferry was accessible, and the people said there was no danger in crossing; but the Cardinal Legate at Ferrara had forbidden the boat to go, and no inducement could make them venture to disobey him. Hensel exhausted all his eloquence, and offered a considerable sum into the bargain, but all was in vain, so we had to return to Rovigo. There we stayed the whole day, receiving contradictory intelligence—now that the waters were rising, now that they were falling—but as no passengers from the other side appeared, it was clear we could not cross. On the morning of the 7th we drove to the Po again, with scarcely a hope, for the water was still rising, and the weather, if possible, even worse; indeed, the postmaster at Polisella, the last station, had almost persuaded us to return, so completely did he prove the impossibility of proceeding further, when a stage-coach from the other side drove into the yard—an irresistible argument in favour of going on, which we did with renewed courage. When we reached the river we found the water higher than it had been two days before, but—the Cardinal-Legate had given his

permission, and we crossed without the slightest danger, though instead of three paoli we had to pay twenty-six, of which the Cardinal-Legate, the author of the whole delay, got two thirds.

Extract from a Letter to Rebecca.

Florence: November 19, 1839.

The delights of Florence, its charming scenery and unparalleled treasures of art, are proverbial. The Pitti Palace and the Uffizzi alone might supply the world from their stores. The Tribune is generally acknowledged to contain the *ne plus ultra* of works of art, but to my thinking there are rooms in the Pitti Palace which almost surpass it as regards pictures; but there are no sculptures mixed with them, whilst in the Tribune you may take in three Venuses at one glance—two by Titian, as well as the Venus de Medici. The liberality of the Grand Duke is beyond praise, for, though living in the Pitti Palace, he admits the public to the free enjoyment of all its treasures, as you will understand when I tell you that the painters who are at work in every room, copying, put down their dirty pallets on the most valuable mosaic-tables. The first time we went the weather was so bad that we were dripping by the time we arrived, and I felt sure they would not admit us, but they made no objection, and if we had chosen we might have dried our wet clothes on the velvet sofas, for the furniture is all without covers. There are as many as six Raphaels in one room, besides others elsewhere, and the whole arrangements are so good that the most hypercritical of critics could find nothing to object to. In the Tribune, on the other hand, I am always seized with a revolutionising mania, for there are some pictures there I cannot think deserving of such a position, whilst other rooms contain many I should like to see there. How I should like, as mother says, to be appointed furnisher and decorator to the gallery! For instance, in a room not always open there is a female portrait by Titian, called Flora, which is a perfect gem. The head is evidently the same as that of his Mistress in Paris, and the pose is similar, but much superior, as I think. I saw it yesterday for the first time, when Wilhelm was not with

me, but I am going to show it to him to-day. That picture I should at once remove to the Tribune.

Fanny writes of the route to Rome by Siena, which they had chosen: 'During the whole way from Florence to Rome I said each day at nine o'clock, What a monotonous and wearisome road this is! At ten o'clock, how charming! By eleven it was again dull; at twelve once more beautiful; and so on for the whole six days. That is the peculiarity of this country: you are in a constant state either of delight or of disgust, and Frau v. Varnhagen deserves some credit for having invented this antithesis without having been in Italy.'

Diary.

One of the most interesting points on the route is Orvieto, situated on a high hill, in the centre of a valley, which is again inclosed by a considerable range of hills. Driving first down and then uphill, you get the most beautiful views of the town. The weather was splendid, the Montefiascone we drank on the way excellent, and our carriage, with four horses, went like the wind, so the whole drive was exceedingly pleasant. The cathedral has a magnificent façade, overloaded with mosaics, sculpture, and architectural ornaments, though we could not quite say, as Goethe does of the Bucentauro, that it *consists* of ornaments only. It is the florid style pushed to extravagance, and the execution is almost painfully elaborate and minute. The double twisted pillars, inlaid with coloured and gold mosaic, are most beautiful. There was enough to furnish us with enjoyment for days together; but we could only stay one hour, or our detestable *vetturino* would have been driven to despair. We are decidedly dissatisfied with this mode of travelling, but hear from all sides that it is the only practicable one in the Roman territory, as they have no such thing as our 'Extra Post.'

Orvieto, the success of that particular trip, was succeeded by the most abominable quarters at Ricorsi, where they were obliged to stop, as there was no other resting-place within many miles. It seems scarcely credible that things could have been

so bad, on one of the most frequented roads in the most frequented country in the world. Two masons were ejected from their beds to provide for Fanny and Hensel, and Sebastian almost had to share his with a poodle. The supper consisted of mutton, the sheep having first to be shot, as it was too wild to be caught. The whole inn looked so like a robbers' den that Fanny declared she was afraid of going to sleep, and proposed that they should stay awake the whole night.

To the Family.

Rome: November 28, 1839.

We have at last reached in safety this important point of our journey, and for some time to come the pilgrims may lay aside their staves. We arrived here at ten o'clock of the day before yesterday, and to-night—only think—we are sitting round a fire in our comfortable lodgings, with all our arrangements completed! They told us at Florence that lodgings were difficult to get, but it is not so: excellent apartments handsomely furnished are offered in abundance, but the rents are high. We really deserve some credit for refusing to conclude a bargain on the spot for some of the very tempting ones we saw; but I am quite satisfied with those we have taken, for I expected something much worse. For our four rooms, well furnished, in the best quarter, but on the second floor, and with no view, we pay thirty scudi a month, which is a medium rent here. I have unpacked all my pretty things, to improve the *salotto*.

November 29.

This is our fourth day in Rome, and—I am almost ashamed to confess it—I have hardly seen anything yet. The weather is bad, and my husband has so far been running about the whole day long. I wish you could see him: it is quite delightful to see his eyes beaming with happiness. He has met with the very kindest reception; everybody seems to be so glad to see him again, and they remember everything he said or did, ate or drank, and all ask after Grahl; indeed, the whole thing amuses me greatly. His reputation and Felix's have smoothed my path wonderfully, but I feel oppressed with the responsibility of

doing honour to my relatives. Meantime, here is December 2, and I have had to make my *début* (without an instrument to practise on at home) at a musical soirée like our Sunday-music —but at whose house, do you think? Cavaliere Landsberg's.[1] He lets instruments out on hire at ten scudi a month, but for old friendship's sake offered me one at nine, which I declined. He is quite an important personage here, and has a pretty *salon*, with a splendid instrument; he received ladies and gentlemen with grace, *ma non troppo*, accompanied a small tenor in 'Adelaide,' and induced another lady to play two trios and me one, while Madame Vanutelli, a beautiful lady with pleasant manners, played the part of listener. All this while I could not help thinking of Rietz and David making him believe that Cerf was going to send him to prison for playing at our house on a Sunday, and of that other day when Spitzeder painted his face like a herald. Verily times have changed with him! Our first visitor in Rome was L., and I must tell you the best thing he said. I played a piece, after which he made the following remark in his Berlin dialect: 'The theme of that piece reminds me very much of an Italian air that I cannot remember. Don't you know, Hensel?' Yesterday we were at the Sistine Chapel, and I saw the Pope and all the cardinals very well, as they passed by. We poor women fare badly at these ceremonies, for we are made to sit in the background, behind a trellis, and those who, like myself, are short-sighted, cannot see much, though we are obliged to sit still for three hours, listening to the *incorrect* and indifferent singing of the Pope's choir, and to the not very interesting performance of the mass by a few old cardinals, with quavering voices. Still, I shall go there often, for it will be better as one gets accustomed to it, and it is one of these duties one's conscience enjoins upon a traveller.

Picture my distress, dear Rebecca. The ambassadors are not going to give any balls this year. And I should so have liked to dance a galop with Kestner. Altogether the season is very dull, Rome is empty, the whole world has gone to Naples, and the rest are left lamenting. However, I do not mind it at all. But I cannot understand why St. Ursula does not bring her 11,000

[1] Formerly one of the violins at the Königstadt Theatre in Berlin.

virgins to Rome, for in this one week I have made the acquaintance of 12,000 bachelors, and there may be more whom I do not know. Children, too, are rare here, much more so than antiquities. However, I discovered to-day a boy of eight, who will probably have Italian and French lessons with Sebastian. But how beautiful the Campo Vaccino is! This, again, is one of those original and out-of-the-way places that surprise one, in spite of all the pictures and descriptions one may have seen or read; not that it is exactly striking, and the effect it produces is not so much extravagant as peculiar. It keeps on increasing, though, and, as one may say, it bides its time. St. Peter's, on the other hand, asserts itself at once, the building and its surroundings are in such complete harmony. It has the air of wishing all beholders to say, 'How beautiful thou art!' and it is impossible to help saying so. Although conscious of this desire to impress, one is not offended at it, so overpowering is the effect, and so immediate. The Campo Vaccino, on the other hand, has so much of accident about it. Nature and time have converted the imposing buildings of the Romans into a heap of ruins, the charm of which, however, is unparalleled. They are now digging away, and bringing to light pillars, walls, and tessellated pavements, but there is much still buried, and the green grass is fast covering what has been so lately exposed; the part above ground, however, remains a silent observer of this age, as it has been of so many before it.

Good-bye! It is just striking eleven, and regularly at six in the morning the *pifferari* rouse me from my slumbers. Theirs is the most horrid music ever produced by human lungs and goat's hide, and can indeed only be outdone by the playing of the Italian organists. No one who has not heard it would believe what that is like; to me the priest singing mass is the divinest music, because it silences the organ. Good-bye, dearest family! I would gladly refuse an invitation from L. to spend an evening with you.

December 8.—Yesterday we dined for the first time with Ingres, director of the French Academy, who received us most kindly. He retains an affectionate remembrance of Paul, whom, to distinguish from Felix, he always calls *Votre frère qui joue*

si bien de la basse. As you know, he (Ingres) is a great fiddler before the Lord, and after dinner we had trios, as is the case every Sunday. The whole French Academy were assembled, all looking thorough *jeune France*, with beards and hair *à la Raphael*, and nearly all handsome young men, whom I could not blame for longing after the flesh-pots of Egypt, in the shape of the balls Horace Vernet used to give. There is no dancing to Ingres's fiddle, for he will have nothing but ultra-classical music. You may think of us there now and then, on a Sunday evening. I thought much of Felix in that house, as you may fancy. A grand institution is this French Academy, and how well off the French artists are altogether! The gifted engraver Calamatta is constantly at work for Ingres, engraving even his portraits, which is what I call being thoroughly well-to-do in the world. Then how beautiful this Villa Medici is, and what an enviable post is that of director here at Rome, the very centre of the art-world, with enormous powers of influence over the pick of the young artists in his own country. It is impossible to imagine a more delightful position for an artist; but, unfortunately, people get spoiled, and do not know when they are well off. I am sure most of us are the better for roughing it a little.

December 11.—To-day is father's birthday, and at Berlin the shops are beginning their Christmas display. Here we are enjoying bright sunshine, and have let out our fire, which, so far, we have only wanted morning and evening. This week I beheld for the first time the priceless treasures of the Vatican, and also, what few strangers are allowed to see, the private apartments of the Pope. This tough old man of seventy-five has had all his rooms newly furnished, in good but simple taste—red damask, with green curtains—as if he means to occupy them for years to come. We admired his splendid ivory crucifixes and inlaid chairs, but the best of all was the view, with the Albanian hills, Monte Cavo, the Campo Annibale, and Frascati in the distance, Rome in the foreground, and the piazza of St. Peter's at our feet. Then we went to see the museum; the *Stanze* are mostly in excellent condition, especially that of Heliodorus. The Mass of Bolsena is wonderful—indeed, so is

everything! In *one* room are the Transfiguration, the Madonna di Foligno, the Coronation of St. Mary, and the Communion of St. Jerome. The Transfiguration, of course, was doubly interesting to me; the copy is really excellent. The servants in the gallery were so delighted to see Wilhelm again, it was quite touching, especially Rinaldi, who used to wait on him. We merely passed through the sculpture galleries, and went on to the gardens. The first, which stands pretty high, is full of flower-beds, and contains the bronze fir-cone from the Castel S. Angelo. Thence we went to a second garden on undulating ground, with enormous orange-trees on espaliers, and hedges of roses and myrtle. On the left you have a view of the Dome of St. Peter's, and on the right, of Monte Mario and the Villa Mellini. There is a summer-house containing some pretty old sculptures, majolica floors, etc., and all about are fountains, ponds—where the Pope feeds the fish—animals of different kinds, and all sorts of beautiful and interesting objects. The views, too, are very varied, from the unevenness of the ground. They presented us with some of the Pope's oranges, which are ripening in our rooms. The grapes are still excellent, but neither the pears nor the bread are half as good as they were in Venice.

To Rebecca.

Rome: December 16, 1839.

What is the use of all this? I must just for once, as Felix used to say, roll in your arms and talk rubbish by letter. You know I always chose you for that department. Dear me, how often I am obliged to keep the very best of nonsense to myself, because you do not happen to be near me! If I have been constantly wishing for you here, it has hitherto been as much for your sake as my own, but the other day I wanted you entirely for myself, for instead of feeling as I did—as dull as a pug on a box—I should have been as frolicsome as a rabbit, if you had been there too. It was at a solemn meeting of the Archæological Society on Winkelmann's birthday (many happy returns!), to which they would make me go. These meetings are held on the Tarpeian Rock, and Kestner now presides instead of Bunsen

The room is painted red in the Pompeian style, and is so antiquely low that Dirichlet would be forced into making his very politest bow. There was a long green table in the middle, with cane chairs on each side (all dug out of the Forum!), and on the table stood Winkelmann's bust surmounted by a nightcap of roses and ivy; you could not call it a wreath, and Minna would have shuddered at it. A few ladies and several gentlemen were already assembled, but everybody was talking in whispers, and the whole thing had such a comically solemn aspect that I felt inclined to burst out laughing even before anybody had spoken But when the speeches began! Kestner, Braun, Ottfried, Müller, and Abeken all spoke *in Italian*, but their pronunciation—well, it was as Italian as their names. Kestner went through his introductory remarks like a sensible old horse that cannot help stumbling at every step, but by dint of walking slowly manages to avoid breaking down altogether. Then Braun took the lead and galloped away, his theme being the archæological merits of the Duc de Blacas. He distinguished himself by mixing up his b's and his p's, his d's and his t's, like a good Saxon, as he is, and altogether his manipulation of the language was so ridiculous that I had to implore Mme. M., who was sitting by me and kept looking at me, to turn her eyes away, or I must have laughed outright. Then came Ottfried Müller—the lion of the occasion —and there was a general ahem! before he began. He set to work to prove from the ancient writers the exact position of a certain building on the Forum, and at first I really fancied it interested me, but soon found out my mistake, and then it all seemed so chimerical, and it would have been so easy to prove the exact contrary of what he was saying, that I felt half inclined to mount the table and add my voice to those of the poor dear old moles. I will let you off the other speeches, as much for my own sake as yours. In the meantime the 19th is here, and Christmas is coming fast, and this poor little thing, who has never spent that day away from home before, feels rather home-sick. Having made up my mind that this letter is not to contain a syllable on antiquities, or any other subject that is not exclusively feminine and nonsensical, I may as well tell you that to my great delight we have been cooking at home since

last week. Jette, like all true geniuses, has profited by repose, and her soups are as classical as the soil. She is very clever, and goes to the market, which is some way off, for everything; and when I asked her yesterday what she had brought for the soup, she said: '*Riso di Pasta!*' She has even, O Minna! baked a poundcake in a frying-pan on the stove, which has only fallen short of absolute perfection because we could not get any powder. I shall stop the first gentleman I meet with powdered hair, and ask him where he purchases his wisdom,[1] and then we will crown your effigy on the Capitol. We will show the Romans what a cake should be! Next time I write I will let you know whether we have an orange-tree or a laurel for our Christmas-tree. We mean to invite Kaselowsky, and possibly the Gibsones, who are very kind to us. I know no other nice people to ask.

Entre nous soit dit, I have never in my life beheld such a curiosity-shop of dull people of every age and sex as we have here. They really seem to have come together on purpose to form an *ensemble* quite unparalleled. For this reason those evenings are the pleasantest which I spend alone with my husband and child, in our very comfortable room. After Christmas we shall invite the different sets of our acquaintance, and endeavour to scatter a few grains of amusement among the highly respectable, but most uninteresting, people. We went a drive both yesterday and the day before, the weather being splendid. The first day we visited the church of San Paolo, some distance outside the gates, which is being rebuilt, and also the pyramid of Cestius and the Protestant cemetery, which, with its groups of pines and cypresses, and roses in full bloom, is a melancholy and beautiful spot in the midst of so many remains of antiquity. We saw Bartholdy's grave, and Sebastian gathered a few flowers from it for mother. We also saw amongst other things the pretty monument to poor Miss Bathurst, an English lady, whose horse took fright whilst she was riding by the Tiber, and threw her into the river, where she was drowned. Yesterday we saw a large part of ancient Rome—the enormous ruins of the baths of Caracalla, the tomb of the Scipios, and the catacombs. The

[1] A play on the words *Weisheit*, wisdom, and *Weissheit*, whiteness.

entrance to the latter used to be open, but the Government had it closed about sixty years ago, after fifty young men who had gone in without a guide lost their way and never came back. A monk with a very expressive Spanish-looking face showed us over them. The monument of Cæcilia Metella also, which is among the ancient tombs on the Appian Way, is not far from the church from which you enter the catacombs, so that there is nothing to break in upon the sort of reverie into which one falls, and which is enhanced, or rather softened, by the brilliant sunshine.

But there! I was not to say a word about anything ancient this time, and I am at it again; it is really impossible to help it here. Indeed, you would never believe how contagious the mania for antiquities is. Before you leave Rome you can see no beauty in anything that has two legs and a whole nose; and as for a building, with all its pillars standing—why, you would not look at it. Now I beseech you, not for fifty pounds of butter, as my husband says, to show this letter to anybody but mother and the brothers and sisters; there is too much scandal in it, and the whole world is but a large wheel.

Letter to the Family.

December 30.

. . . My enjoyment of the charming weather and the bright, warm sunshine is really tinged with regret because you cannot share it, for, though it would be too hot for mother, Rebecca and the others would delight in it. I am more and more convinced that even ten years ago a journey to Italy would not have suited mother. To see everything—people, curiosities, and views—you have to climb *in Cima* as they call it here, and that alone would have been sufficient to put it out of her reach, not to mention the fleas and other well-known drawbacks. But if I could suddenly transport you to the Villa Mills (it takes this very prosaic name from its present owner, an Englishman), where you drive up to the gate and enter a garden in which, without exaggeration, millions of roses are in full bloom, besides thousands of other flowers, you would be enchanted. Besides the flowers this garden has other attractions; the ruins of the Palace

of the Cæsars extend into it; the walls are made up of ancient fragments; there is a summer-house painted by Giulio Romano, and, in fact, magnificent views meet your eye in every direction. The whole place is like an enchanted castle. It is actually on sale, and may be had for a trifle! Who feels inclined to buy it?

We have been making use of the delightful weather this week to visit several places, and even during Christmas time we did not neglect our duty as strangers. Dear mother, I hope you will admire us when I tell you that on Tuesday, at ten o'clock, after the distribution of the Christmas presents, we drove to the Sixtine Chapel to hear the musical mass, and, though we did not get home till midnight, we were up next morning in the dark, and by half past eight were in St. Peter's, to secure good seats for the procession in which the Pope is carried round. We were most successful, for in St. Peter's the women are not so badly treated as they are in the Pope's chapel; indeed, quite the reverse, for they have the best seats on a raised tribune, whence they can see and be seen, and in consequence they display themselves in many-coloured bonnets and feathers, instead of the black veils supposed to be obligatory, but of which I did not see a single specimen. The whole ceremony is very magnificent and very amusing. There is a grand display of uniforms—civil, military, and clerical—and the scene altogether conveys the idea of a play acted for the benefit of the strangers. When the Pope himself was officiating at the altar, and 'turning now to this side now to that,' I was again reminded of Goethe, whose diary of November 9 I beg you to read. I could not help thinking also how astonished St. Peter would be if he were to come in and see the pomp and display! But you will be wanting to know how our Christmas festivities went off, and I am anxious to hear about yours. We invited two or three people, and got ready a few presents for them, our Christmas-tree being composed of branches of cypress, myrtle, and orange, the latter laden with their own fruit, and it all looked very pretty. My husband gave me a beautiful little cabinet, inlaid with ivory, and I gave him a sketch by Paul Veronese, which he liked very much. Many thanks, dear mother, for your promised presents; we shall need them indeed, for by the time we get home we

shall be complete beggars. I have always heard that people get thin in Italy, but certainly their purses do. I am a Falstaff in comparison to mine.

Letter to the Family.

January 9, 1840.

. . . Among all the beautiful things we have seen one has given me special pleasure, dear mother, and that is the Casa Bartholdy, now inhabited by some English people, who have filled the rooms with beautiful rugs, carpets, sofas, and a quantity of old furniture and valuables, so that the whole place looks very bright and pleasant. They kindly allow strangers to go over the house, and I looked about me with mingled feelings of pleasure and emotion, the more so from my husband being able to describe how it all used to be. Now there is a collection of modern pictures selected with great taste, and a profusion of vases and majolicas—all delightful traces, it seems to me, of the artistic mind which once had its abode here, for it was undoubtedly the room painted in fresco which gave the originating impulse to the whole as it now stands. I had a similar sensation at the charming Villa Albani, where the innumerable treasures of art were formerly arranged by Winkelmann in beautiful rooms built for the purpose. After his time they were long left in a state of total neglect, but the present owner has restored them to their former condition, and liberally thrown them open to the public. People used to be allowed to wander through the rooms and garden at will, but three months ago a tourist chipped a piece off a statue to take away as a memento, and now you are only allowed to go round with a servant. I am sure I should have shut out strangers altogether if it had been my villa.

February 4.

The oranges are still hanging on some trees, while others are already white with blossom. Monthly roses have been in bloom the whole winter; and yet this heavenly climate and rich soil produce less than is wrung out of our sands by northern energy and industry. Think of the asparagus Berlin sends to

all parts of the world in spite of her twenty degrees (Réaumur) of cold, while here, where nature needs so little aid, eatable fruit is scarcely to be had in winter, and the few vegetables are very inferior. Ah! what might not be made of this country and of its inhabitants if Providence would but send them the man they need. A favourite subject for discussion in our leisure hours is, What would have become of the world if Napoleon, leaving France and the rest of Europe alone, had occupied himself with reorganising Italy? In my opinion France would have been quite as well off without him, and Italy would have again become what it was once, an earthly paradise.

Letter to the Family.

February 25.

We are still in the full tide of the merry Carnival, and I am far more amused with it all than I expected. I need not enter on a formal description, for Goethe took that trouble off my hands fifty years ago, and not only the principal features, but even many of the masks, have remained unaltered since then. The chief day, that of the Moccoletti, is still to come. We have tried all modes of seeing the fun, from a balcony in the Corso (in three different situations), walking, and driving in a carriage, and I decidedly prefer the last. In this manner you are carried safely and comfortably through the crowd, and also get the best of the fun, which consists in the war maintained against the carriages from the houses, and also by the two rows of carriages between themselves. The different missiles, *confetti* (made of plaster of Paris), sugar-plums large and small, and bouquets, the latter being, of course, the most *distingué*, are generally returned in kind, and Sebastian was quite indignant with me the other day for sending a bouquet in reply to a volley of *confetti*, because I happened to have nothing else at hand. Flour is *mauvais genre*, and, properly speaking, forbidden, but bushels of it are used notwithstanding. Altogether a good many people, especially strangers, treat the thing without any grace, and find their amusement in the quantity and hardness of the materials, which they shower down from a safe distance in the second or

third story. Even from quite near, you get very sharp volleys in the face; but everybody is mad enough or sensible enough to take no offence, but try and revenge themselves in the best way possible. The Prince of Syracuse, brother of the King of Naples, hired a balcony, and poured down such an inexhaustible stream of flour that it was hardly possible to pass his corner; but a young Roman noble who had specially suffered from his pelting had *confetti* made in the shape of maccaroni, and *riposted* with them the next day, which they say so annoyed the Neapolitan maccaroni-eater that he has been better behaved ever since.

Among the most amusing of the caricatures was a gaily decorated cart, containing a body of surgeons armed with huge forceps in which they held skulls and teeth, singly and in sets, a tremendous squirt, and other instruments of torture, all on the most gigantic scale. On the box was a man who had been trepanned, and at the back sat a savage. In this manner they paraded the Corso, shouting out panegyrics on their own skill, till at last they stopped in front of a balcony, on which sat a bevy of ladies, and, having held a consultation as to their health, they declared unanimously that all the symptoms indicated the use of the syringe, raised their squirt, and ejected from it—a large bouquet. A fellow with a big beard, in a woman's gown and cap, but without a mask, went stumbling about complaining that he could not find a place to be brought to bed in. Many of the coachmen are dressed up as women, and in some cases are by no means bad-looking. The large carriages, gaily decorated and with wheels wreathed with laurel, are very pretty. They generally carry about a dozen maskers dressed precisely alike, which has an irresistibly comic effect; but when you see one of these carriages coming, you must look out for your face, as you are sure to receive a perfect hail of *confetti*. Most ladies wear wire-masks for protection, but I can only have a veil, as I cannot do without my glasses. On the Giovedi Grasso, one of the best days, I drove out with a daughter of Thorwaldsen, a very pleasant woman, and her niece, and Sebastian. You cannot imagine how fully one is occupied on these occasions. What with keeping one's eyes open to see the fun and avoid being pelted—what with returning, if possible with interest, the fire

one has received, and arranging the ammunition collected in the carriage—what with keeping up a conversation with the masks who climb on the step, and behave like acquaintances till they can find an opportunity of throwing something in your face, I can assure you one's hands are full. However, one gets into the spirit of it, and before long feels almost insulted if a carriage passes without throwing, it looks so like neglect. Do you recognise your daughter, dear mother, frolicking away for hours in the midst of this turmoil, and in a noise which can be compared neither to the roaring of the sea nor to the howling of wild beasts, being like nothing but itself? I believe the open air has a great deal to do with it, for in a room it would be intolerable. I shall never forget one of the masks I saw yesterday—a tall, thin young man dressed as a *ci-devant jeune homme*, in a scarlet silk coat, with swallow-tails trailing on the ground. The so-called *Conti*, too, with paper collars three yards long, and wigs of red and yellow curls mixed, look very nice. The gardeners with their long scissors exist still as Goethe described them, and unfortunately the same accident he mentions happened a few days ago—five horses started a few minutes late for the race, and, darting through the crowd, which always flows together again the moment after it has been divided, knocked down several people. Two have died already, and the number wounded is from four to twelve, according to the different accounts. Ever since the guard have been a little more strict, but the soldiers have really a disagreeable duty to perform, for the excited populace only jeer and laugh at them when they want to make room, and will not be kept from running across the road behind their backs. They are just like naughty children, for of course the order has only been given for their own safety. Such mad proceedings in the most sober-minded city in the world really form a remarkable contrast. If we could have anything so amusing in Berlin, the Leipziger Strasse would be a splendid locality for it, much better than the Corso.

March 14.

. . . I feel I owe you a description of the close of the Carnival, and a few lines will give it you. The last evening

but one there was a *fête*, of quite an exceptional character from the locality in which it was held. This was a ball in the Capitol got up for the benefit of the children made orphans by the cholera, by several members of the Roman nobility, under the patronage of the young Princess Borghese (a Talbot), who is a charming and beautiful woman. As we had not been out in the evening for six weeks, and had missed some magnificent *fêtes*, my good husband insisted upon accompanying me, and, thank God, he is none the worse, although the rooms were very cold.[1] The Piazza in front of the Capitol being too narrow to allow many carriages to turn, we drove up by the Forum, which was lighted up with torches, as also were the square and the halls. Unfortunately the weather was very bad, and the rain put out a good many of the torches, but the sight of the venerable columns, triumphal arches, and ruins, in the weird, flickering light, left an impression never to be forgotten. The effect would have been truly magical on one of the clear moonlight evenings of which we have had so many. The whole of the splendid rooms, with their rococo furniture, were brilliantly lighted, but otherwise the ball was not superior to the general run. Admission being by payment, the company was rather mixed, especially as regards the beloved English, who, regardless of age or obesity, hopped frantically round in these celebrated rooms.

The next day was that of the Moccoletti, and, unfortunately, it poured without ceasing, in spite of which I enjoyed myself exceedingly. The whole thing is so mad it becomes almost poetical, but it is perfectly impossible to form any idea of it unless you have seen it. We were in a carriage with a coachman dressed as a Turk, and, after using up a whole packet of matches and two sets of wax candles, we gave it up and submitted to the jokes lavished on every 'obscurant,' as by remaining *senza moccolo* we could see more of what was going on. When holding a light one has so much trouble in protecting it from either being blown out or snatched from one, and it is so difficult to light it again, as a thousand hands are ready to baffle one's endeavours, that we were quite tired out.

[1] Hensel had been seriously ill.

Extract from a Letter Home.

March 15.[1]— . . . I hope and trust that you have been spending as thoroughly successful, as beautiful, and as bright a *fête*-day as we have. This morning I finished a little composition, and Wilhelm added the last strokes to a small picture which he had done whilst still too weak to sketch from nature. It is the study of a head begun at Venice, and for the last few days I have not been allowed to see it, but this morning he called me upstairs and presented it to me on your birthday. At two o'clock the united families of Hensel and Kaselowsky stepped into a carriage, in warm and delightful weather, and drove out through the most distant gate of Rome—the Porta San Sebastiano. The atmosphere was unusually transparent, even for Italy, where the most distant objects stand out with a clearness and softness of which no picture can convey an adequate idea, for the simple reason that it is altogether beyond the reach of human means, being a gift from heaven itself. The streets were thronged with loungers, who remembered nothing of Cesar's death, but were entirely occupied with your birthday. The peasants and the nurses from the hills were in all their Sunday finery; processions of priests of all colours, cardinals in their red and monsignori in their violet stockings, and women and boys on donkeys, were walking, riding, and driving into the country. A number of girls who are to be married after Easter (marriages are forbidden in Lent) were going on foot to a convent, where they were to reside for some time, in fulfilment of a vow, and looked very pretty in their gray gowns, with cords round their waists, and white veils like nuns. As for ourselves, we drove along very merrily (my husband was in one of his Sunday moods, and the rest of us never stopped laughing the whole day long), past the monument of Cæcilia Metella, which is one of my favourite spots, on the Via Appia between two rows of grand ruins, to a place called 'Roma Vecchia,' where a very picturesque farm stands, surrounded by beautiful ruins. Here you are so near the mountains that you can distinguish

[1] Leah's birthday.

every house in Frascati. On the farm is the well that Wilhelm introduced into his picture of the 'Woman of Samaria.' This being the limit of our excursion we got out of the carriage and walked about, while the gentlemen, great and small, sketched, and then drove along an interesting road to the grotto of Egeria. Here you pass right through the 'Campagna di Roma,' which, with all its desolation, is so charming. Herds of cattle, cows, horses, goats, and sheep may be seen grazing in every direction, and quite as ubiquitous was Aurel Robert's herdsman in the fur jacket, whom Wilhelm persists in calling a cross between a man and a sheep. In the grotto of Egeria we drank your health in some Orvieto we had taken with us, dear mother. What could be more classic or more romantic? We then turned homewards, and got back in very good spirits by six o'clock, to an excellent spring-soup and roast hare, which, prosaic as it may sound at the close of such a day, we enjoyed thoroughly. In the evening we had Severn, the English painter, whose likeness Wilhelm began, and two young musical enthusiasts, English and German, who know Felix. The former begged me to accompany him in the great aria from 'St. Paul,' which he did not know very well by heart, and, as I did not know the accompaniment perfectly either, it turned out rather a queer performance. Afterwards I played several things I *did* know by heart, and the evening 'was as bright and pleasant as the morning had been.'

Diary.

On Saturday we had a beautiful drive, the day being cold and clear, though disagreeable. We went first to the Villa Wolchonsky, which commands one of the finest and most extensive views in Rome, and has a beautiful garden with part of the ancient aqueduct running through it. There is a charming walk with a hedge of roses on one side and enormous prickly pears on the other, and each of the ivy-covered niches of the aqueduct contains a bust. It is altogether a lovely spot, and we have decided (wind and weather permitting) to celebrate Rebecca's birthday here. Then we drove to the Battisteria of the Lateran,

to reach which you pass through a beautiful, picturesque court, then through the church to the inner court of the convent, which is surrounded by cloisters and separated from the outer court by two rows of small pillars. The cloisters give striking evidence of the exuberant fancy of the architects and sculptors of those early times, for no two pillars are alike. We noticed several like those in the cathedral at Orvieto, twisted in various ingenious ways, and inlaid with mosaic. In the centre of the court, between two pillars, is a well, said to be that of the Woman of Samaria, but in reality dating from the early Middle Ages. The walls contain beautiful fragments of sculpture, partly built in. The painters are all in distress because some fine trees, which stood here formerly, have been grubbed up and sold by the monks. They say too that the fragments used to lie about in a much more picturesque manner. In spite of all, however, it is wonderful still, and from this and a few other buildings, which have escaped the general ruin, one is able to form some idea of the glorious beauty of Rome down to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. At that time, indeed, when the monuments of ancient Rome were still in a state of almost complete preservation, and the buildings of Christian Rome of the Middle Ages—splendid in architecture, and gorgeous with mosaic and sculptures—were for the most part already in existence, how wonderful, how overpowering it must have been. If the world of our own day, with its love of art and knowledge of its history, could but have one glimpse of Rome as it was then, what a different aspect it would present to the Rome of to-day—maimed and mutilated, ever insulted by fresh incongruities and absurdities, but still the Eternal City, in spite of all that man has done by cruelty, bigotry, and want of taste to degrade it. It makes me quite sad to think of all that has been destroyed in the last thousand years or so by the stupidity or the arbitrariness of man. And even in our own day, look at the miserable patchwork in the Coliseum, which seems to have been made as glaringly white and as offensive to the eye as possible; while, to crown all, they add a tablet stating that it is the work of his most holy of holinesses, Gregory XVI. This mania of the Popes for putting their names on every trifling thing they happen to build is really provoking.

Letter to the Family

Rome: March 25.

Rome is in a state of profound astonishment, for, only fancy, on March 25 snow has been falling fast and thick for the last four hours; and, moreover, it is *lying* on the houses and in the streets *a foot deep*. After enjoying the finest spring weather for nearly the whole winter, as my letters have told you, so that we needed neither fires nor warm cloaks, it suddenly turned cold and disagreeable at the beginning of the Carnival, and on March 21, the first day of spring, regular nasty Berlin March weather (if I may be allowed the expression) set in, with a cold sun and still colder wind, which sent the dust and rubbish swirling out of all the corners, which in Rome is not saying little! This state of things has continued for the last four days, and to-day it has ended in snow. The Romans, who make a festival of anything and everything, have been enjoying themselves in the streets the whole day—snowballing one another with much laughter and shouting, and leaning out of open windows to see the fun. Everybody indeed is in a state of perfect delight. Sebastian and I enter into the general amusement, whilst my poor husband is quite disheartened and put out by such behaviour on the part of his beloved Rome. His wry face matches the appearance of the little garden we see from our back windows, which had been put in such trim order, but the orange-trees laden with fruit are at this moment quite covered with snow. Just now the sun is breaking, bright and warm, through the clouds, and will, I suppose, soon put a stop to this disorderly state of things. 'The sun allows no white.' (*Aber die Sonne duldet kein Weisses.*)

Tempted by the sunshine we ventured out, and, wading through the snow with some difficulty, reached the top of San Trinità de Monte (we could get no farther), and from this point enjoyed the strange spectacle of Rome completely shrouded in snow. Several hours' sunshine followed by several hours' rain have not yet cleared the roofs, on which it still lies thickly. They say nothing has been known like it before. So much for a snowstorm in Rome.

Diary.

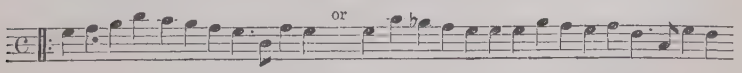
Sunday, April 5.—We spent the evening with Ingres, to meet Vernet, who was very pleasant, but might have been taken for an Arab, as his long beard, marked features, sparkling eyes, and brown complexion are quite in keeping with his oriental costume. His wearing this sounds ridiculous to those who have not seen him, and we were quite prepared to laugh; but there is really no feeling of masquerade about it, as all is ni harmony with the picturesque dress, which is made still more effective by his European cleanliness and innate taste; his manners too have a flavour of the East which makes the *tout ensemble* interesting and impressive. We had a great deal of talk with him, which could not fail to revive an old project we have often discussed together, and we spent half the night after in serious conversation, the upshot of which was 'Learn to labour and to wait.' This, being an essentially German maxim, is altogether beyond a Frenchman's powers of comprehension, and when Wilhelm told Vernet of his intense longing to see the East, he looked quite bewildered, and said it would only take him a fortnight to get there. A Frenchman's light way of looking at life and bending outward circumstances to his will is most catching, and for the moment difficulties and obstacles disappeared, and in all sincerity I urged upon Wilhelm to take us back to Trieste and then and there embark for the East, but his grave and deliberate arguments soon convinced me of the impossibility of the whole thing. How hard it is for me to feel that my very existence entails such sacrifices! Vernet's energy and outspokenness have enabled him to realise what has long been the dream of our life, and the secret will soon be common property. *There* lies the future of art, and all this Wilhelm would have accomplished if he had only had the power to carry out his ideas. But we Germans always have to wait! always have to let the right moment pass! always come too late! We cannot cut ourselves loose from the ties of home and family, to say nothing of our own individuality. The whole matter absorbs and moves me deeply.

Diary.

I begged Vernet to let Wilhelm draw him in his picturesque dress, to which he very kindly consented, and came this morning with the old painter, Reichardt. I had a nice breakfast ready, and the conversation was most animated, Vernet talking much of the East, and of his next project of going straight from Paris to Algiers to paint battle scenes. Reichardt and another painter stood watching my husband at work, and helped him by dipping his brushes in the white, for Vernet had only an hour to spare. Meanwhile I played, and in less than an hour the drawing was finished, to the great delight of the painters, who were full of admiration at Wilhelm's extraordinary rapidity. Vernet himself was more than satisfied, so it was a very pleasant morning.

Diary.

Yesterday, Good Friday morning, we went first to pick up d'Ossoli, who accompanied us to the Sixtine, as I was afraid I should not be admitted without a ticket. I secured a seat among the front places, and, as the verger later allowed a few of the ladies to go close to the railings, I saw all the ceremonies perfectly this time, and came to the conclusion that the adoration of the cross is one of the finest. The 'Passion' was sung first, and this time I succeeded in catching the thread and following it to the end. The arrangement is, broadly speaking, the same as that adopted by Bach. The part of Jesus was sung by a fine bass voice, the Evangelist by a rather harsh baritone. The music to the choruses of the people is by Vittoria, and these short passages in four parts, with the words sung straight through without variation or repetition, are most important as a refreshment after the incredibly monotonous delivery of the 'Passion.' With the exception of these short choruses all is recited to a melody running something like this—

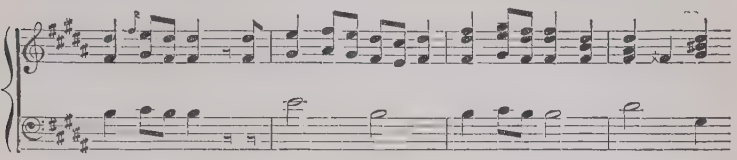


the emphasis and duration of the notes varying according to the number of syllables. Of course there is no expression at all. The words are sung with a certain pathos, but with obvious haste. I was deeply interested, and my attention did not flag for a single moment, but Sebastian Bach was in my mind all the time. These obsolete forms of singing strongly remind me of ancient mosaic, but they strike me as even more stiff and death-like. This likeness is easily explained, for the two forms of art date from the same period. I believe, too, that in a Byzantine church my ear would not have been offended by such singing as it was here in the Sixtine, where art has been carried to the culminating point of perfection—nay, almost beyond it—and where, in consequence, the utter poverty of the music is felt to be the more incongruous. The music peculiar to the Sixtine Chapel, on the other hand (a musical composition such as those of our great masters I have not yet heard), bears the stamp of a much later period, being of an almost exaggerated sweetness, and in rather a rococo style. I speak strongly, in order to preserve the clearness of my impressions on this matter for the future. Such music conveys no idea of the majesty of art; simple music simply performed would come much nearer; but more of this hereafter.

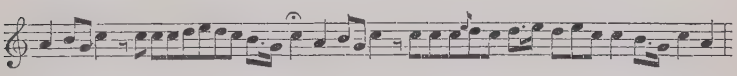
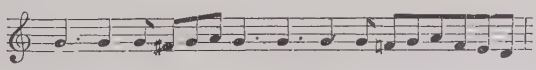
When the 'Passion' was over the Pope came in, and a Latin sermon, preached with alternate pathos and ranting, followed, after which came the prayers. These are a series of collects for —literally—God and the whole world, and at each one the cardinals bent their knees. As in so many other cases, the Church of Rome has degraded this ancient and once simple and beautiful ceremony of the adoration of the cross to a mere outward display, and they bow like old women at a tea party. The prayer for the Jews alone is pronounced standing. *Tout dégénère entre les mains des hommes.*

After the prayers are over a cross is placed in the middle of the chapel, and the Pope, having been divested of his chasuble and tiara, steps forward in a beretta and long white gown to adore the cross, the cardinals and the rest of the clergy following in turn. During this ceremonial the Improperie are sung to

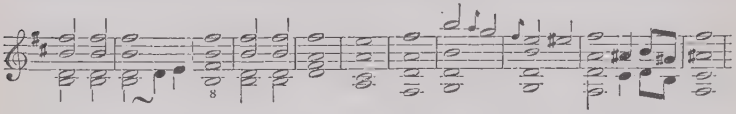
Palestrina's music, which runs as follows, the same short passage being repeated with scarcely any deviation:—



It sounded very soft and sweet, partly because the first soprano, though very powerful, was particularly sweet in tone. The alto was very bad, and got terribly flat. They began the 'Miserere' on Thursday and the 'Improperie' on Friday in B major, and ended in G; indeed, on Friday it was almost F minor. After the adoration of the cross they went in procession to the Paolina, to fetch back the sacrament; the Pope had no baldacchino on the way there, but he returned walking under it, with the pyx in his hands, and was received at the railing of the sanctuary with a parasol, which made him look like a mandarin. On the whole, however, it was a beautiful and impressive ceremony, and with very little alteration might be made really edifying.

Wilhelm sketched half a dozen cardinals, and then we drove home quickly, dined, and were back in the Sixtine shortly after three o'clock, as I was determined to hear all the music as exactly as possible. The first of Allegri's 'Lamentations' is a beautiful composition in four parts, but I could not write down anything of it. This is the melody of the second:—

They are sung in unison, in various keys, and with no rhythm, which made it very monotonous and fatiguing. Then came the rest of the Mass, Psalms, etc., sung in unison or by a single voice, for the most part to the following melody, eternally repeated:—

This lasts about three hours, during which time the lights on the altar and in the triple candlesticks are extinguished,

only six large candles on the railing that divides the chapel in two being left burning in the increasing darkness. The large figures on the ceiling have quite a startling effect in the dim light, and one is oppressed with fatigue from the long monotonous singing, when suddenly, after a long pause, the four voices break into sweet harmony, and begin *piano* with the exquisite 'Miserere.'



This would be beautiful under any circumstances, but in these surroundings, and after what has preceded it, the effect is prodigious, and for two hundred years has never failed to produce the strongest impression. This is another example of the cleverness with which everything in the Church of Rome is calculated to affect the senses; but how any one can allow themselves to be caught by what is obviously a matter of calculation, clever though it may be, remains a mystery to me. Divested of its weird poetry, and looked at solely from a musical point of view, Allegri's 'Miserere' is a very simple four-part versetto in G minor, repeated with little alteration ten times, and used by the singers merely as a canvas to be embroidered with their traditional and somewhat rococo embellishments. The choir is said to have contained as many as eighty voices in former times, but yesterday there were only nineteen, for I counted them as they passed one by one through the ladies' tribune to their seats in the choir. As I said before, they begin the 'Miserere' in B minor, but are unable to keep this key, and at each versetto go down about a third of a note, so that they end in rather a low key; but this had rather a good effect than otherwise. They sing the same 'Miserere' both on Thursday and Friday, but on Friday it was over a little earlier, and everybody went to St. Peter's, where another was sung. The singers being placed in a high gallery visible to all, in the full blaze of daylight and lamplight, it was a very fine sight.

This evening we were at a curious party at the Countess Kaisaroff's. After all the church music we have heard during the last few days, the brilliant idea occurred to this good lady of

performing Pergolese's 'Stabat Mater.' The accompaniment was a quartet, the strings being played by Landsberg, Bousquet, and good Mr. Levreux with his sweet smile, while I had to take the piano part; but I got so weary over it that I almost fell asleep as I was playing. A bass and a tenor sang the 'Stabat Mater' very well—indeed as well as one could wish—but we had had more than enough of that kind of music already.

Saturday, 18th, we took a rest and allowed the Jews and heathens to be baptized in the Lateran in our absence, but sallied forth at noon, when the firing and ringing of bells began. During Lent every bell in Rome is silent, but at Easter the enormous bell of St. Peter's gives the signal, and is immediately followed by the peals in all the many hundred churches, the deafening but not discordant noise being completed by the firing of muskets and cannon. After a few moments on the 'Passegiata,' we went at three o'clock to 'San Biagio degli Armeni' in the Via Giulia, where divine service was sung to a music which resembled nothing but the howling of cats. I am positive that no worse torture was ever inflicted upon the human ear—not in the idol-worship of the Caribs, or the adoration of Vitzli Putzli by the Mexicans—than in this service of the Armenians, no word of which I could catch but 'Miow!' The sanctuary is separated from the congregation by a chintz curtain, and a second incloses the altar; in fact, the costume, movements, and inarticulate singing are very Jewish, and altogether barbarous compared to the Roman Catholic service.

Yesterday, being Easter Sunday, we attended high mass at St. Peter's in the morning, and I own that the crowded church and infinite variety of costumes made it a wonderful spectacle. There was a fine procession, in which for once the Greek and Armenian bishops take part. Those we saw were most distinguished-looking, the former being a remarkably handsome young man with a black beard and wearing a kind of crown, and the latter a splendid old man magnificently dressed and wearing a mitre. We afterwards went up to the *loggie* above the colonnades to see the benediction. Only the space nearest to the church is filled, but it is a very solemn moment when the Pope raises his hands to bless the people, who all fall

on their knees; I could scarcely appreciate it, though, being half dead from fatigue. In the evening there was an illumination, and the outlines of the cupola traced out by innumerable lamps, making it almost like an architect's plan, had a marvellous effect. At the moment the clock struck eight a torch issued from the top of the cupola, and the whole instantaneously became one blaze of torchlight. It was very wonderful for the moment, but still I prefer the simple illumination by lamps. The finest thing is the view of the cupola from the Pincio—it stands out so brilliantly from the dark sky, and looks such an enormous size above the mass of black buildings.

The strangers in Rome generally disperse after Easter, everybody leaving for Naples or other places more distant, but the Hensels remained and entered on quite a new phase of their existence, perhaps the very happiest in all Fanny's life. As the diary and letters will show, they had formed an inner circle of intimate friends, most of whom were artists, or at any rate people of artistic tastes. Among the foremost of these were three young Frenchmen, Bousquet and Gounod, musical students at the Academy, the latter being the now famous composer, and Dugasseau, a young painter more amiable than gifted. Another friend was Charlotte Thygeson, a young Danish lady, a relation of Thorwaldsen and an accomplished pianist. The circle was completed by the German painters Magnus, Elsasser, and Kaselowsky, and it was this charming society which made their last few weeks in Rome so pleasant.

Diary.

Thursday, April 23.—We dined early and drove to the Villa Mellini on Monte Mario. The view is charming, especially on the way up, for from the top the lines are somewhat confused and irregular. St Peter's is very fine, but the Vatican looks a short compact mass, for which reason I prefer the view from the Pincio, where you see it stretching out in long lines. The windings of the Tiber with the Ponte Molle and its castle look very fine from this point. As we drove down the hill, the evening glow increased in intensity, and as we crossed the Ponte

Molle on our way back the hues of sunset gave a fresh charm to the landscape. Now that everything is green, it is perfectly delightful to get out of the streets and have a peep of the country. In the evening some people dropped in, and I played much to dissipate the dulness profusely distributed by some English ladies. After they had left I began again *de plus belle*, and played till midnight. Bousquet and Dugasseau make my task rather difficult, for they never forget a single thing I have played, even though it be months ago. A more improving audience it would be impossible to find. I also compose a great deal now, for nothing inspires me like praise, whilst censure discourages and depresses me. Gounod is such an enthusiast in music as I have seldom seen. He likes my little Venetian piece very much, as well as one in B minor that I have composed here; also Felix's duet and Capriccio in A minor, but above all Bach's concerto, which I have had to play to him at least ten times.

Sunday, 26th, I went in the early morning with Wilhelm to the garden of the Academy, and it was so beautiful. On Saturday evening we had a long debate, which lasted far into the night, as to whether we had not better prolong our stay here through next winter; but in the morning good sense and sound arguments prevailed. While walking in the Villa gardens we decided to reward ourselves by staying at least till the end of May; like the famous drunkard, who, after having safely passed three gin-shops, treated his resolution in the fourth. It will cost us both a hard struggle to leave Rome. I could not have believed that it would have made such a deep impression upon me. I must not conceal from myself that the atmosphere of admiration and homage in which I have lived may have had something to do with it, for even when quite young I never was made so much of as I have been here, and that this is very pleasant nobody can deny. Everything combines to attach me to Rome, and how good it would be for my Wilhelm and his work! But it will not do, so we have made up our minds.

In the afternoon we made a delightful excursion. We had engaged a carriage with the Schadows, and we ladies drove to Ponte Salaro, while the gentlemen followed, mostly on horseback. There we climbed a hill, which commands a beautiful

view of Ponte Nomentano and that part of the Campagna which is encircled by mountains, on the further side of Rome, of which one gets a glimpse now and then between the hills. Afterwards we had a charming walk in the cool of the evening through the meadows and hills of the Campagna, as far as Acqua Acetosa, a mineral well close to the Tiber. Nothing can be more enjoyable than climbing the high hill near Salaro, to gaze upon the divine landscape one sees there, and then coming down to discover an entirely different view towards the Tiber, which is here joined by the Anio. We drove home by the Arco Oscuro, and spent the evening with Ingres. In the morning I felt quite possessed with the notion of giving a real concert in the beautiful garden-hall of the Academy, and I went hoping to persuade Ingres to give his consent. But he is full of objections, and evidently does not care for it as I do, so I do not think we shall come to an understanding.

To Rebecca.

Yesterday we made a charming excursion, and an amusing one too. There was a *festa* at Santa Croce, a church opposite to the Lateran, but separated from it by an enormous meadow, to which the people repaired after the service, and amused themselves the whole day. Bousquet and Gounod called on us the evening before, so we invited them and Kaselowsky to drive with us. Just as we were going to start, another Frenchman arrived who stayed in the same house with us at Venice and has been spending the winter here—a painter, and a very pleasant, cheery fellow. We took him in too, so with the coachman we made eight in the carriage. The young people were so boisterously merry, the country so beautiful, and the weather so delightful, that it was altogether a happy day. We got out first at the tomb of Cæcilia Metella, to find an echo about which Felix had written to us.[1] The French painter sat down on an old wall, and

[1] The passage is: 'Don't forget the echo near Cæcilia Metella. The tower stands to the left of the road. In the same direction, about fifty yards further from the road, among some old ruined walls and stones, there is the most perfect echo I have ever chanced to meet with in my life; it seems as if it never would cease muttering and murmuring. It begins in a slight degree, close behind the tower, but the further you proceed the more mystical it becomes. You must try to find the right spot.'

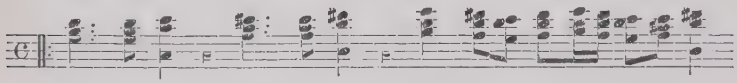
so comically and cleverly imitated our singing and shouting that we were all taken in at first. As you may be sure, we gave *that* echo plenty to do afterwards, but at last we found the right spot, and held a long conversation with the real one. Then we had a feast of oranges in the carriage, and they made no end of fun with a napkin we had brought with us, and which they tied round one another as if they were going to be shaved. At last they began to sing, and then the brilliant idea occurred to me of teaching them that delightful comic song—'Laudon rückt an' ('Laudon is coming')—and you should have seen the fun they made of it, and the serious pains they took to acquire the right pronunciation of those two words. They succeeded at last, and, in spite of laughing, we sang very well together. Our pretty excursion ended with the Villa Wolchonsky, from whence we could watch the crowd, without getting involved in the dust and confusion ourselves.

I have been composing a good deal lately, and have called my piano pieces after the names of my favourite haunts, partly because they really came into my mind at these spots, partly because our pleasant excursions were in my mind while I was writing them. They will form a delightful souvenir, a kind of second diary. But do not imagine that I give these names when playing them in society; they are for home use entirely. Cécile Gibsone is quite right in praising our hospitality in foreign parts, for I am sure we deserve it. We have kept open house, or rather open *salon*, here after our manner, and have hardly spent three evenings alone the whole winter.

Diary.

In the evening some people called, amongst others K. and T. K. is always chasing after wit, but it declines to be caught, and bounds off at so smart a pace that he is left hopelessly behind. T. is so unutterably dull that I can find no word which describes him, dull being much too short; a new one should be invented expressly for him, the very sound of which should send one to sleep. Ingres is certainly awkward for a Frenchman, and T., without doubt, is most lively for a Dutchman, which

proves that a dull Frenchman is more amusing than a witty Dutchman. In short, it was a dreadfully sleepy evening.

Sunday, May 2, there was a grand Mass *ai Greci* (the Greek church), which surprised me not a little. I had expected such music as we heard at the Armenian church, but what we did hear was church music well written in three parts, conducted from the score, and sung firmly and correctly by a well-appointed choir, placed near the congregation. The voices were two basses and one tenor, and the music properly constructed vocal compositions. The following is the melody assigned to most of the responses:—

It was all fuller in tone and in better style than the Roman Catholic mass, and the ceremonies had a peculiar grandeur and distinction, much enhanced by the personal appearance of the bishop, which is a great contrast to that of the Pope. The music did not strike me as ancient. In the evening I played a good deal, finishing with Bach's concerto, and all the people went quite mad about it, though they had heard it so often, and pressed about me shaking and kissing my hand. Among those who found the greatest difficulty in composing themselves was Gounod, who, lively as he is, declares himself quite at a loss for words to express his appreciation of my influence over him and his happiness in our society. There is a great difference between him and Bousquet, who is much calmer, and has a decided *penchant* for the French classical school, while Gounod, romantic to a degree and full of passion, seems quite upset by his introduction to German music. It has startled him like a bomb-shell, and I should not wonder if it did as much damage.

Monday, May 3, spent the morning at the Villa.[1] The delicious air and sound of the bells gave one quite a Sunday feeling. My happiness here is indescribable. For some time past I have been in a state almost of exaltation, so intense is one's enjoyment of life in its purest and highest sense. The only drawback is

[1] The Villa, unless otherwise specified, always means the French Academy.

the feeling that we must so soon be leaving this paradise; and then poor Wilhelm will no longer have the delight of working to the top of his bent in this glorious spot. Ah! happy they who may and can live here!

. . . We went to see Overbeck's sacred picture, which struck me as dull, feebly poetical, and slightly presumptuous. I could say a great deal on this subject, but have not the patience. One thing I must mention, however—he has actually had the arrogance to place in a corner of the picture, himself, Veit, and Cornelius, as the elect spirits of the day. *Je trouve cela colossal.* I dare say it will look better in the engraving, for it has a certain simplicity and breadth of composition which makes it easy to understand, and the bad colouring and poor painting will not show. If the engraver is clever, too, he will go to the originals for the heads of the great men whom Overbeck has turned into old women. I am bound to state that Wilhelm is of a different opinion, and thinks much more highly of the picture than I do; but I will bow to no authority, even his, having eyes of my own which I mean to use.

Thursday, May 7.—We spent a delightful day at Tivoli. The Paulsens, who arranged the party, came to fetch us at half past six, and Magnus and Buti went with us besides. The day was magnificent, and the road on which we drove from the Porta San Lorenzo towards the mountains seemed to increase in beauty the whole way. Our route lay past Taverno, Solfatara, the beautiful bridge of Lucano with the tomb of the Plauti, like that of Cæcilia Metella, and up the ascent to the town of Tivoli, through a forest of grotesquely shaped olive-trees. We got out of the carriage at the temple of Sybilla, and after a good breakfast mounted our donkeys (my husband will bear witness that I acquitted myself well) and rode first to the larger cascade, which we surveyed from above, from below, from all sides in fact, and then made our way along a wide and beautiful road to the opposite side of the valley, in which there are several spots from whence you can see the cascades, the Cascatelle, and the Cascatelline all at the same time. The latter are beautiful falls of considerable height among the hills of the Villa of Mæcena; the Cascatelle, too, are very fine. Our

way led through the olive wood down into the valley, and over a little bridge back to the other side. Then we climbed the hill again to the Villa d'Este, where there are the most wonderful cypress-trees I ever beheld for height and breadth and thickness, and also some beautiful stone-pines. The buildings are in rather an antiquated style, and the whole has an unfinished look, especially as the Duke of Modena, its present owner, does not keep it in repair. We next made our way on foot to the Grotto of the Sirens by a difficult but beautiful path, which, however, shows signs of renovation, railings having been put up, as well as seats wherever there is a view to be seen. This is most contrary to the habits of the country, and I have become so thoroughly naturalised that I prefer the customary Italian negligence. After this we sat down in front of the temple looking over the cascade, and ate our excellent *pranzetto* in the highest spirits. By desire of the company Wilhelm improvised a little poem, which I set to music and, having written out the parts, sang with Charlotte and Magnus, to the immense delight of the rest. After sitting comfortably over our meal for nearly two hours, we drove on to the Villa Adriana. This is a wilderness of ruins, pines, olive-trees, and cypresses, and looked most striking in the rosy hues of a brilliant sunset. We wandered about till the Ave Maria, and then drove back under the clear evening sky, with a glorious moon. The day was one of entire enjoyment, and the Paulsens have shown us a most successful *gentilezza*.

Friday, May 8.—In the afternoon I went to the Villa with Wilhelm, who began a study. I showed him the view from the Belvedere, which he had not seen before. In the evening Magnus came in, and our Frenchmen, or, as we call them now, the three *caprices*—for Bousquet has surnamed himself *Caprice en là*, Gounod *Caprice en mi*, and Dugasseau *Caprice en si bemolle*. As usual, we had plenty of music, talk, and laughter, and did not separate till late. Bousquet showed me a cantata he is at work upon, which seemed to me to contain much that was beautiful. His acquaintance with German music will be an unmixed benefit, I believe, but so far Gounod seems to be only bewildered and upset by it. He strikes me as much less matured than his

comrade, but as yet I know nothing of his music, for a scherzo he played to me the other day and asked me to accept was too bad to be taken into account at all; I thought I discerned some traces of German influence in it.

Tuesday, May 12.—After several rainy days I went to the Pincio this morning. The air was so delightful, the green so fresh, and everything so beautiful! How happy we are here! How glad I am that we are going to stay another fortnight, and how sorry that it is only a fortnight! Such is, I may confidently state, my habitual frame of mind now.

Just at the last we have made the acquaintance of a very nice Irish family. The son called on us before, and lately he has introduced us to the eldest daughter and the rest of the family. They consist of three gigantic daughters—with handsome English faces on long slender flower-stalks, who all ride, paint horses and landscapes, talk German, French, and Italian fluently, and sing badly—a tall son, a number of children, a pleasant mother and a good-looking father, and they live in handsomely furnished apartments in the Rondanini Palace which Goethe mentions. Most of the characteristics I have given are decidedly English, but their amiability and friendliness are so contrary to the spirit of that nation that I was all astonishment, till I heard that they were Irish, and then I understood it. Their name is Palliser. They knew Felix in Frankfort, and he is their Alpha and Omega. The mother told me with much pride that they had sung some of the choruses in 'St. Paul' to him; but he would not be particularly enchanted, I fear, for singing, as I said before, is by no means the best accomplishment of the family. The cleverest of them is the eldest daughter, who is indeed an accomplished lady, and a very charming person. With regard to the English in general, it would be impossible to find a ruder or more churlish person than an Englishman with whom you are not acquainted. I get quite vexed with them every day. They live here in such a compact mass as almost to form a nationalty of themselves, but they seem somehow out of place, and in consequence their ways offend one's taste, as they would not do in their own country. I avoid playing at English parties as much as possible, for, however languid the conversation may

have been during the whole evening, it becomes as animated as possible the moment music begins, and again flags as soon as it stops. The national pride, which enables them to do such great things as a nation, seems intolerable arrogance in the individual, and even when they take pains to be kind they are generally as clumsy as bears.

May 13.—I went with Sebastian to Santa Maria sopra Minerva, which contains the statue of Christ by Michael Angelo and many tombs, including those of several Popes. There is also a cloister with frescoes, out of which, as usual, I was driven by the monks. In the evening the Frenchmen dropped in, and Wilhelm began their portraits, a great deal of fun going on, of course, in the meantime. Each sitter was allowed to order me to play whatever he chose, and in this manner I went nearly through 'Fidelio,' besides several other things, and ended with Beethoven's sonata in C major. Gounod behaved almost as if he were intoxicated, and talked a lot of nonsense; but when it came to his exclaiming with immense enthusiasm, '*Beethoven est un polisson!*' the others pronounced it high time for him to be in bed, and carried him off. Again it was half past twelve before we separated.

Thursday, May 14.

Wilhelm gave me a charming little picture of a shepherd-boy which he had painted in two or three days. In the evening I spent an hour on the Pincio in the dusk. The moon was already up, and shedding a mellow light, which beamed clearer and clearer as the darkness increased. The stars came out one by one, and the buildings at my feet lay in calm repose, all that offends the eye by daylight being obliterated in the subdued radiance. The grass and even the paths were full of glow-worms, the air was mild, and a sense of perfect repose hovered over all —the beauty of the scene was indeed indescribable, incomparable, and I shall never forget it. My eyes are wet at the bare remembrance of it.

Extract from a Letter to the Family.

Yesterday evening our performance—Bach's triple-concerto —came off capitally before a brilliant assembly at Landsberg's,

and was received with much applause. I believe I told you that I was practising it with Charlotte Thygeson and a clever lady amateur here. Yesterday I could scarcely suppress my delight at finding myself playing this grand piece in Rome, and thus gaining new friends and admirers for our old master. I am entitled to claim part of the credit for myself, for it is not everybody who could have made them understand and feel it. My thoughts when playing Hummel's quintet beforehand were very different, for I don't think I have ever played it since I was studying with Zelter. For the concerto Landsberg placed in a row three superb grand-pianos, by the same manufacturer, which he had just got back from the Inglesi. They occupied the whole side of the room, and looked very imposing. The room was very full and very hot, but the evening was most enjoyable.

We have had some rainy days and a good deal of the sirocco, but it does not affect me much. They say that it is only after being here some time that one feels its effects, as well as the influence of the climate generally, which is what I have heard southerners say of our northern climate. People who have lived here for many years have assured me that at first they found no ill-effects from drinking tea, having flowers in the room, etc., but that they had had to give them up one after another in course of time. So far we have had tea every evening, and it agrees with us perfectly, and I have always had a bouquet in my room too, without feeling any the worse. I may as well answer your question about diet now. It is long since we have had any 'tormented fruit,'[1] for what is there to torment? but we enjoy the oranges, which are almost the only thing to be had cheap. You get ten, twelve, or even sixteen, according to quality, for a paolo (about half a franc), but they are not better than those at home; indeed, as a rule they are not properly selected, all kinds, good and bad, being mixed together. There have been very few vegetables hitherto, but since last week we have had excellent green peas and good strawberries, though not so good as those in our own garden; we hear that they are excellent at Naples. My husband is extremely fond of fennel-root, and has one every day; so we shall try to cultivate it in

[1] Hensel's nickname for preserves, compôtes, etc

Berlin, for you have no idea how much he likes it. I have not been able to accustom my taste to it, nor to the roast capretto, which they praise so much, either; it tastes like wild mutton. The thing I enjoy most is the air, which I can never praise or appreciate enough.

Diary.

May 16.—Early this morning I went with Wilhelm to the Villa Wolchonsky, to make arrangements for our party there on Tuesday. What a paradise it is! Mingled amongst the ruins grow roses, cypresses, and aloes, all in profusion! And yet with all the luxuriance there is a kind of solemnity. It is indeed a lovely spot, and if our party does come off at last it will have a charm all its own. This evening we mean to go and see the Coliseum by moonlight.

May 17.—Our evening yesterday turned out something quite different from what we expected, but none the less enjoyable. The sun set and the moon rose in a clear sky, and nobody thought of being anxious about the weather. Magnus and Landsberg came in the evening, and at nine our Frenchmen appeared with a fourth, Terry, a violin-player from the Comic Opera, introduced by Bousquet. By this time the moon had so completely clouded over that we gave up all thoughts of the excursion, and with many lamentations countermanded the carriage. It was a great nuisance, for I had to sit down to the piano, and it is long since I have played anything so badly as I did 'Les Adieux, l'Absence et le Retour'; I suppose I was put out by the presence of a stranger. Afterwards I played parts of 'Fidelio.' As I began a sonata the sky cleared a little, and by half past eleven it was quite bright, so we resolved amid general acclamations of joy to walk to the Coliseum. We took the way past the Fountain of Trevi, which looked very fine, and Monte Cavallo, where the colossal figures and fountain looked perfectly glorious in the moonlight—indeed I have never seen anything more wonderful; the whole of the Piazza was magnificent, especially the perspective. Then down through the Basilica of Constantine, to the Coliseum of Trajan, at the back of which, towards the Forum, a lamp was burning before

the Madonna. It was all wonderful, splendid, but the Coliseum! The moon kept disappearing behind the clouds, and then peeping out again, which added to the effect. After staying a good while we walked back the whole length of the Forum. Gounod climbed an acacia-tree and threw us down whole branches of blossom, so that we looked like Birnam Wood walking to Dunsinane. In the meantime I had taken off my bonnet, as Cécile did her cap in the cotillon (though with no intention of imitating her). We then went on to the Capitol and the Pantheon, which looked so calm and solemn, and by Monte Citorio to the Piazza Colonna. At this point somebody began to sing Bach's concerto, and we all joined in in chorus, keeping step to the time; in short, we walked through Rome like a parcel of tipsy students, and to-day I feel ashamed to think I should have behaved so before a perfect stranger. He had only arrived in Rome the day before, so his first experience was a curious one. It was half past one when we got home; but we hardly sleep at all now.

Sunday, 17.—We were rather tired in consequence of our exertions last night, and not sorry that a projected excursion with the Schadows to Veii was given up, owing to the weather. We spent a pleasant evening with the Schadows, and I had a good deal of conversation with Reinick, who is very nice. After this we had a delightful adventure. On our way there we had been on the Pincio enjoying the mild air and the sight of the millions of glow-worms, and when we left at eleven the clear light of the moon, then just rising, tempted us to go again as far as San Trinità. There we met Dugasseau, who had been with Ingres, and who was much astonished to see us, and turned back with us. When we reached the Academy he tried to persuade us to go into the garden, because it was so beautiful, and while we were hesitating he went under Gounod's window (he lives in the entresol) and called out to him to come down, for a gentleman and lady wanted to see him. Gounod came to the window and called out, *Bah, elle est bonne, votre dame, je voudrais bien la voir!* taking me for a fellow-student dressed up in woman's clothes. In the meantime somebody had opened the gate and we walked into the garden, which was

really an enchanting scene. Dugasseau fetched Gounod, who had hastily dressed again, but Bousquet was fast asleep, for which he was well laughed at by the others. After spending some time in the garden, they suggested that we ought to go into the *Boschetto*, and without giving us time to consider Gounod rushed back to his room and fetched the key, so we walked through the trees to the Belvedere. I have never seen anything so beautiful as the view from this spot by moonlight. All the nearer objects, the buildings and groups of trees at the Villa Borghese for instance, were as clear as by daylight, while we could see the faint outline of the hills beyond, and St. Peter's quite sharp and distinct. The obelisk and church of San Trinità looked splendid too. And then the little wood, as we looked back on it from the terrace, with the silver light shining through the dark trees—it was heavenly! Dugasseau was in a funny humour, and would not allow Gounod to go into ecstasies, as he was on the verge of doing. *Je n'ai jamais commis de vers dans ma vie*, he said quite seriously. We tore ourselves with difficulty from this enchanted spot, and again it was half past one when we reached home.

How much I have seen and gone through in Rome! When rambling about in this merry way under the bright southern moon, I thought a hundred times of that first night of Wilhelm's illness, when I sat by his bed in such deadly anxiety! I have a curious feeling that all these experiences have made me younger instead of older. Such a tour as this is a treasure for life.

Letter to the Family.

Villa Wolchonsky: May 20, 1840.

We are having a day of intense enjoyment—a truly poetic day, and it shall not pass without our thoughts flying to you. It is a day worthy of the Decameron, for everybody is allowed to do what they please; but as we all choose to do only what is proper, we could appear without hesitation before the tribunal of the princess. So testify the undersigned (here follow the signatures of Mdlle. Thygeson, Bousquet, Dugasseau, Magnus, Kaselowsky, the two Elsassers, and the Hensels, father and son,

with various additional remarks). Hensel concludes: 'I may add that the day has ended as happily as it began. I will leave descriptions to Fanny, the queen of the *fête*, whose comprehensive glance has embraced everything, and whose tribute has been the results of our industry. She may now enjoy the additional pleasure of detailing the delights of the day.' Fanny continues:—

Rome: May 20.

Dear Mother and Brothers and Sisters,—We have had a day such as one reads of sometimes in novels, but which does not occur more than once in a lifetime—a day like one in a poem, every moment of which will live in my memory. All present have written their names above: there were six painters, one musician, two amateurs, and Sebastian. I should have liked to have had our second French musician, Gounod, as I know few people who can enter into a day's amusement more heartily and happily than he, but he was ill and could not come. Since April 11, the date we had originally fixed, we have had to postpone the party several times on account of the uncertain weather, and even now it rained the day before yesterday, so that we were doubtful whether it could come off to-day. However, the sun rose bright and beautiful, and Wilhelm started at seven with Kaselowsky, the Elsassers, and Sebastian, I following at nine in a carriage with Charlotte Thygeson, Bousquet, and Dugasseau, while a donkey-cart took the plates and provisions. On our arrival we found the painters already scattered over the garden at work, for we had settled beforehand that industry was to be the order of the day, and everybody had promised me the result of their labours. Magnus alone did not contribute, and declined to work the whole day. We musicians set tasks for each other: I brought an Italian poem for Bousquet, which he turned into a pretty little duet, and he brought me a volume of Lamartine, from which I set a few stanzas. At noon we breakfasted in a roomy, thatched summer-house, from whence we had fine views on all sides, and there, one by one, they produced their work amid general amusement. Elsasser made a beautiful water-colour sketch, Wilhelm a study in oil, and

Kaselowsky and Dugasseau drawings, all of which I shall bring home with me, so that you may have an idea of the luxuriance of this charming spot. We did not hurry over our meal, as you may imagine, and, after spending a couple of hours very pleasantly together, we dispersed again as the fit took us. Charlotte, Magnus, Bousquet, and I sat in the shade of the ruined aqueduct, with a hedge of roses in front of us, and tried some of Felix's and my part-songs for two, three, and four voices. You will laugh when I tell you how we divided the parts—but after all it is only a fool who tries to do better than he can! I sang soprano! Bousquet—who has no more voice than I, what he has being tenor—took the bass; he knows nothing of German, but in spite of all obstacles we did some of the songs very fairly. One that I had composed expressly the day before would not go, but it will do some day for one of our garden parties. Towards four o'clock the sky clouded over and a thunder-storm came on. We had gone to the neighbouring Villa Massimi, which contains some frescoes by modern German painters, but the storm drove us back, and we took refuge in the *sala* of the Villa Wolchonsky, an elegantly furnished room, with large windows on both sides commanding exquisite views. There we watched the thunder-storm sweeping over the glorious landscape. Then we sat down to dinner, and Jette's cookery met with universal approval from the various nationalities. At every instant, however, we kept jumping up and rushing to the window or on to the Belvedere, for the storm was followed by a rainbow more splendid than any I ever saw—a perfect double arch, glowing with the most intense colour; it exactly spanned my beloved hills of Albano, and was visible for about half an hour. Before we had finished dinner the weather had completely cleared up, and we took our coffee in the garden. Towards evening the Paulsens came, and the gentlemen played *Boccia*, while we walked about the garden, until it grew quite dark, and the glow-worms came out. Then we sat down again in another arbour of roses which had been lighted up (illuminated roses look very well!), and performed the songs we had practised in the morning. When it was quite late we went back into the *sala*, drank tea, and drew a little

lottery we had prepared. The first prize was an engraving after Raphael, and the others a purse I had crocheted and several of my piano-pieces that have been favourites here, which I had copied in my neatest hand. Fate however proved very adverse, for my *three* piano-pieces fell to the Paulsen family, the best going to the colonel, who is half blind and thoroughly unmusical, but a great admirer of mine. However, I think Fräulein Thygeson will eventually get them, so they will be in good hands. The engraving fell to Magnus, who does not know what to do with it, as he is leaving in a few weeks; and all the gentlemen who had worked for me drew blanks—*i.e.* sheets of notepaper with little views of Rome. In consequence I was obliged to promise that I would copy several more of my pieces. About midnight we came home, thoroughly satisfied with our day's pleasure. And really I have never seen a more perfectly successful *fête*; there was not a drawback of any kind, for even the thunder-storm added to our enjoyment. Neither was there a minute unoccupied, for conversation, grave or gay but always interesting, was going the whole day, and there was not one of us, I believe, who did not feel his or her mental qualities to have risen above the average. How you would have enjoyed yourself, Rebecca! Do you fancy now that I talked about you to these friends whom you have never seen?

The chief attraction of the Villa Wolchonsky is, as L. used to say of Rome, 'the situation of the old hole.' The Villa itself is not a palace, but a dwelling-house built in that delightfully irregular style of Italian architecture which I am so fond of. The staircase is quite open and can be seen from the outside. Through the garden lengthways run the ruins of the aqueduct, which they have turned to account in various ways, building steps inside the arches, putting seats at the top, and filling the vacant spaces in the ivy-mantled walls with statues and busts. Roses climb up as high as they can find support, and aloes, Indian fig-trees, and palms run wild among capitals of columns, ancient vases, and fragments of all kinds. As for the roses, there are millions of them, in bushes and trees, arbours and hedges, all flourishing luxuriantly; but to my mind they never look more lovely or more poetic than when clinging

to the dark cypress-trees. The beauty here is all of a serious and touching type, with nothing small and 'pretty' about it. Anything of that kind you do see is owing to the bad taste of the last few centuries. Nature designed it all on a large scale, and so did the ancients, and the sight of their joint handiwork affects me even to tears. Altogether my feeling so young here has a decided tinge of the Indian summer, for whenever I feel particularly glad comes the melancholy reflection that not only this delightful time, but the prime of life itself, is passing rapidly away: these ideas do not occur to one when one is young in fact as well as in feeling. Be that as it may, I enjoy the present moment after my own fashion, more than I can say, and I know that you are all glad we are so happy. Only you must not mind if when we come home we talk of nothing but Italy; I cannot promise not to do so, for my heart is too full of it. We have another beautiful day in store, a pendant to the Villa Wolchonsky, but I will not write anything about it until it has actually come off. I will send you an account of it from Naples, for this will probably be my last letter from Rome. No, Rebecca! we are not going to stay a fortnight longer, and another fortnight after that, although Ingres and his guests did torment us almost to death yesterday, and talked of getting up a petition signed by the whole French Academy, and although my husband has left it to me to decide, and although there is the Corpus Christi procession on the 18th, and part of the new church of San Paolo is to be consecrated on the 21st! We are strong-minded, and mean to leave Rome: our carriage is all ready. But in the meantime we are enjoying the most delicious days and nights, drinking the cup of pleasure to the very dregs, allowing the least little bit of time for sleep, and passing half the nights in strolling about, drawing, and making music. I can scarcely bear to be under a roof now, and have not been even to the Vatican for ever so long. In the evening my husband can hardly prevail upon me to come in, and when on the very threshold I hesitate, for fear of being shut in from the air. But do not be alarmed, our nerves are neither excited nor unstrung, but we are in perfect health and tranquillity; it is only the feeling that this beautiful time is

coming to an end which, added to the exquisite air, makes us forget to sleep. Ah, how sweet is life! and what a pity it is that we are using it up so fast! If we could only say to a special day—Stay! and let me look a bit closer at you! Good-bye, dearest mother and sisters and brothers—good-bye in all probability from Rome!

Diary.

Thursday, May 28 (Ascension Day).—This morning Wilhelm went to see Soutzos,[1] took him back his beautiful sketches and water-colour drawings, and vowed eternal friendship with him. About eleven o'clock we drove to the Lateran to see the benediction. It was a splendid sight, the Piazza crowded with country people, the steps beneath the arch of mosaic covered with women, the sky, the hills, and our beloved ruins all wrapped in the warm haze, which added a touch of poetry to the scene. We stopped for several hours in our open carriage, and though the heat was great I did not find it overpowering. The benediction was far more impressive than at St. Peter's, partly from the peculiar charm of the surroundings. The wind was blowing from the church towards us, so we heard the Pope's voice distinctly. Wilhelm mixed with the crowd and made many sketches. Soutzos also took his portfolio; and Dugasseau, who has been taking a sketch of the villa from the walls, as a pendant to his Wolchonsky picture, got in and drove back with us. The peasant-girls Wilhelm had drawn recognised him, and walked laughing and talking by the side of the carriage. He gave them some money and went on drawing as he chatted with them. It was all very pleasant, and like a scene in the classics. While we were at dinner Elsasser came in and brought me his picture of the Protestant churchyard.

Saturday, May 30, after half past one at night.

The day has been occupied in packing the great chest and several boxes. Kaselowsky shared our last dinner, and appreciated the excellent lobsters and a bottle of Orvieto. In the

[1] A handsome young Greek, who had latterly been admitted to the circle of intimates.

afternoon I continued our packing, with many interruptions from visitors, and, dead tired as we were, we went for a little while to the Passegiata in the evening. The sirocco had been blowing all day, and the day before as well, so everybody was sleepy and grumbling, and many seemed scarcely able to hold up their heads. We had a thunder-storm in the afternoon, but the evening, though oppressive, was fine. We came home lighted by glow-worms, to find that we had missed several visitors, but old Santini was waiting to wish us good-bye. After he left we were alone till nearly nine, when Dugasseau came, quickly followed by Bousquet and Gounod, and by Charlotte. I was very tired and low, so to prevent myself beginning to cry again I went to the piano and played the two allegros from Beethoven's sonata in F minor. In the meantime Wilhelm began to put the lights into the portraits of the three, and I promised Bousquet that if he would sit properly I would play him the allegro from the sonata in B flat major once more, which I did after Charlotte had played a few pieces. Then I played two of Felix's songs, and Gounod was on his knees begging me to play the adagio when the Bellays and Brunis came in. Elsasser and Kaselowsky were there also. The charming idea occurred to Elsasser of drawing a little landscape under his portrait, and he sat by the piano at work upon it. Wilhelm was drawing Madame Bruni. I played the sonata in C sharp minor and two pieces of Felix's, when Elsasser asked for the sonata in A flat major with the variations, and I had just played the two first movements when we heard singing in the street, which proved to be a delightful serenade in our honour. Landsberg, Magnus, Baron Bach, Quatrocchi, Schanzky, and Bruni were standing in the doorway opposite with lanterns, and they sang three part-songs very correctly and prettily. Wilhelm went down and fetched them, and in return I played them the little song without words in E major. Then Madame Bellay sang my Italian cavatina twice through, Wilhelm drew Bruni's face as a kind of mask over his wife's portrait, *et pour finir* I played Bach's concerto. We broke up after half past one, in a state of mingled pleasure, emotion, and excitement. Having first written my diary, I got to bed about three.

Letter and Diary.

Sunday, May 31.—We were invited to spend the day from breakfast till evening at the French Academy, and have music in the lovely garden-hall, as I had wished. The weather, which had been dreary and oppressive for the last two days, was kind enough to show us special favour, and the day was again one of those I shall never forget. The Academy garden, which is generally open, was closed to the public, and Ingres had invited only those living in the house, and the *habitués*, and some of our friends, such as Elsasser and Kaselowsky, and Charlotte Thygeson, whom he sent for on hearing me express a regret that she was not present. I assure you it is quite delightful to play to the plash of a fountain; I have not often felt so merry as I did on this day, and Papa Ingres was in ecstasies at hearing *so much* music, and being allowed to accompany in some of Beethoven's pieces, although we kept up a kind of silent antagonism, for I would play fast, and he had to hobble after me as best he could. We played with scarcely a break till the second breakfast, and all the time the bearded fellows (French Academy students) were lying about on the steps and pedestals of the pillars, in a state of unmitigated astonishment at our being able to enjoy ourselves in this manner from morn till dewy eve. It was really worth our while to have come all the way from Berlin to teach them how to while away the time in the most heavenly spot on earth. Then we had a deal of pleasant chat, and an abundant breakfast, after which we had music now and then, but walked about in the garden between whiles, and sat in my favourite *boschetto* practising part-songs. Ingres took us to his studio to see his much-talked-of picture, which was to have been finished in a fortnight when we came. The composition is beautiful and the sentiment noble, but both drawing and colouring are weak, and it is not nearly finished. We saw Vernet's room arranged in the Turkish fashion, and then climbed up to the Campanile, where I had never been before, and from which I saw the splendid view for the last time in the light of the setting sun, not without many tears. When we went down again the instrument had been moved into the large hall, the

twilight was rapidly deepening, and a peculiar sensation stole over the whole company. For a long time I preluded as softly as possible, for I could not have played loud, and everybody talked in whispers and started at the slightest noise. I played the adagios from the concerto in G major, and the sonata in C sharp minor, and the beginning of the grand sonata in F sharp minor—with Charlotte, Bousquet, and Gounod sitting close beside me. It was an hour I shall never forget. After dinner we went on to the balcony, where it was lovely. The stars above, and the lights of the city below, the glow-worms and a long trailing meteor which shot across the sky, the lighted windows of a church on a hill far away, and the delicious atmosphere in which everything was bathed—all combined to stir in us the deepest emotion. Afterwards we went to the end of the hall and sang the part-songs, which gave great satisfaction. I repeated by general request the Mozart fantasia to finish with, and the two capriccios, and then the part-songs were asked for once more—and then midnight had arrived, and our time was over. 'They weep, they know not why!' was our last music in Rome.

The tender embrace Ingres gave me would have been more acceptable if it had not taken place in presence of all the young men, who I have no doubt enjoyed it exceedingly. I am sure they owe us the pleasantest day they have ever had under Ingres's direction.

Diary.

Monday, June 1, 1840.—In the morning made up accounts, did sewing, received visits, and packed. Wilhelm went out once more, and did a little to his drawings of the Pallisers, which are very good. In the afternoon all the friends came, and at five we drove out, first to Angrisani to order our horses, then to St. Onofrio to see the glorious view, and on to the Villa Pamfili, where we arrived at sunset; the pines were dipped in liquid gold, a glory overspread the entire city, the mountains were glowing with colour, the Alban Hills a burning purple, and the villages rosy red. We stayed till the sun had gone down, and

then drove to Acqua Paola and St. Pietro in Montorio. Never perhaps have I seen such a glorious evening in Rome as this our last one, and I should like to write down something of it for my own recollection, but I do not know how to begin. St. Peter's standing out against a sky of pure gold, the Alban Hills bathed in violet, and all the interesting objects between those two spots, seen through the rich glow of the atmosphere —all, all is beyond words. The new moon was just over the church, and Jupiter close to St. Paul's, but the other stars were not yet visible. Four brown monks were standing on the steps of the church, the door of which was still open, so I went in for a moment, drawn by a devotional impulse I never felt before. Then we went to the corner of the piazza before the church, from whence there is a still better view of St. Peter's. The lights in the city were lit, the Ave Maria was ringing, the evening had come, and our last day in Rome was over.

During the whole evening visitors were coming and going— Madrazo, Landsberg, Magnus, Kaselowsky, and Elsasser; Soutzos came late and brought me a drawing; Wilhelm copied a beautiful poem for him, and I promised to send him a song from Naples. He was much affected, and must, I am sure, have some secret grief, most likely an unfortunate love-affair, he is so very touching and melancholy. Elsasser calls him 'quick and quiet,' which is very appropriate. Kaselowsky took Wilhelm's portrait for the artists' album; they have just left, at twelve o'clock, and mandolines and castanettes may be heard in the streets.

A glorious time has passed away! How can we be thankful enough for these two months of uninterrupted happiness! The purest joys the human heart can know have succeeded each other, and during all this time we have scarcely had one unpleasant quarter of an hour. The only drawback has been that the time would go so fast. Our last farewell from St. Pietro in Montorio was not easy work. But I retain in my mind an eternal, imperishable picture, which no lapse of time will affect. I thank thee, O God!

NAPLES TO BERLIN.

'I have a great deal to make up, for I could not write on the journey, not even make a note, as I had no book with me. The few moments of leisure we had at Albano I employed in writing home, though I had great difficulty in overcoming my overpowering fatigue, and now we are sitting at Naples, which shows itself to us for the first time, owing to the sirocco and fog, in one uniform tint.'

These first remarks in the diary after leaving Rome give the key to the rest of the journey. They had already touched the acme, and although, as the following pages will show, Fanny did full justice to Naples, and kept her eye and mind open to all that was beautiful, still it was only the eye that was gratified and not the heart. That was full of Rome; and now that that delightful part of their journey was over, she became homesick. The enthusiasm, the deep happiness she had felt at Rome were gone, and, though still admiring the extraordinary beauty around her, she went through the sight-seeing as a duty, and longed for repose.

They left Rome on June 2, 1840. Their friends bade them a cordial farewell. Bousquet drove with them to the Alban Hills, and roamed about there with them. The conversation often turned upon the pleasant time they had enjoyed together in Rome, and on the friends they left behind.

Diary.

Directly after passing the Campo Annibale we entered a charming road through the forest, which continued to the very summit of Monte Cavo. On our way Bousquet told us much that was deeply interesting. We had talked much of Gounod

before, and Bousquet lavished alternate abuse and pity upon him for having given up all participation in those delightful last days. Now he told us how far Gounod had allowed himself to be drawn into engagements of a religious nature, the result of which he much feared for one of his weak character. Père Lacordaire, of whom I have often heard the Frenchmen speak, passed his novitiate at Viterbo and was ordained this winter, and he intends spending some time in Rome, in order to prepare for the foundation of a new house in France. He has the reputation of having *une tête chaude* and a great deal of imagination, and he is endeavouring to secure as many artists as possible, hoping to influence through them many who are inaccessible to the clergy. During the winter he tried to win over both Bousquet and Gounod, and the latter, excitable and easily influenced as he is, has so thoroughly embraced his views that Bousquet is afraid he will give up music and take to the cowl. Bousquet himself discontinued his visits as soon as he discerned Père Lacordaire's intentions, not feeling himself strong enough to resist his eloquence, which, he says, is extraordinary. The Society of St. John the Evangelist in Paris consists entirely of young artists, who have bound themselves together with the object of employing Christian art to convert the worldly minded; beyond this they have taken no vows. Lacordaire has been asked to draw up the rules for this fraternity, and Gounod is said to have joined it. A number of young men of the best families who were at Rome last winter, some already engaged in other avocations, are now devoting themselves to the priesthood, in the hope of emancipating the world through religion. All this is very remarkable, especially when contrasted with the hideous materialism and insatiable avarice now so rampant among the French. It is the reaction from these tendencies in an unusually violent form.

Letter Home.

Naples: July 9, 1840.

. . . If I were to give my best first, I should begin with the view I am at this moment privileged to enjoy, but I had rather proceed chronologically, so will continue the account of

our journey from Albano, on which Bousquet accompanied us as far as Genzano. While he was still with us we met another French painter, Bonirote, who was on a walking tour to Naples. The Pontine Marshes did not impress me particularly, for it is only in one or two places that they look really bad. I was very sleepy, and should certainly have gone to sleep but for Sebastian, who watched me with Argus-eyes and never allowed me to indulge in the shortest nap. At Terracina, where we spent the night, the scenery becomes suddenly beautiful, with palm-trees, the sea, and grotesque rocks up which the town seems to climb. It has a decidedly more southern aspect than Rome, my own beloved Rome, for which my husband and I, though sitting on the finest balcony in Naples, daily moan a two-part song with or without words, as it happens. I assure you it needed some firmness to break off our life there, for the various circumstances which united to make it so charming may, perhaps, never occur again. Terracina has a splendid hotel, actually on the sea, which when we arrived was sparkling in the last rays of the setting sun. A harbour is being built besides other things, so Terracina is actually the first town in Italy in which I have seen any building going on. We ate our supper, and fell asleep to the murmur of the sea. Next morning we continued our journey, and part of it, along the sea, was delightful with luxuriant vegetation. Then, passing a lake, we turned inland, losing sight, but not scent, of the sea, for our noses every now and then reminded us of its vicinity. The way from Fondi to Itri was a wild mountain pass. At Gaeta we once more reached the sea-shore, and got a foretaste of Naples, for the two have much in common. Here again the hotel is close to the sea, with a garden full of orange-trees leading down to it. A good place that! To the right is the fortress on the rock, and the wide gulf; to the left, the lovely promontory shading off towards the horizon in a soft haze. The foreground consists of cypresses, pines, orange-trees, and olives growing down to the water's edge. The weather was splendid and the sunshine dazzling. We had an excellent breakfast, and then took a siesta in the clean, well-furnished rooms, one of which has a charming little *loggia*. We made inquiries about the

cost of living here, and found the terms really very moderate. They ask only three scudi a day for the beautiful room with a large balcony, and the view I have been describing right over the centre of the garden, with its suite of bedrooms and board. It might indeed be worth while to come here—what say you, Rebecca? In the afternoon we continued our journey. After leaving Gaeta you get among hedges of myrtles, aloes, wild roses, and other things of that kind, and the vines climb to the top of the tallest trees; indeed, the vegetation is marvellous. One of these hedges is as good as a whole flower-garden. We had intended to pass the night at Capua, but changed our minds just as we did when approaching Rome. It was a splendid evening, with a beautiful moon (which, however, clouded over by-and-by), and still early, so we were seized with impatience and drove right on to Naples without stopping, and dropped straight into the best apartments we have had yet. They consist of a fine *salon* and three bedrooms, with a pleasant view over Sta. Lucia, Pizzi Falcone, and the Island of Capri, with a peep of the sea. But this is not all, nor the best of it. Adjoining our *salon* is a larger and better-furnished one, with a balcony about sixty feet long and twenty-five wide, belonging to the most amiable of Englishmen, Lord Cavendish, who retains it during his stay at Castellamare, and the Cameriere, being as noble-minded as the nobleman, has placed it entirely at our disposal. The balcony has three large glass doors opening on to it, an inlaid marble floor, and an iron balustrade. When you step out the view almost takes your breath away, for you see to your left that part of the town which is towards Vesuvius, and the mountain itself in its very best aspect, with the innumerable villas and villages dotted over its base to about a tenth of the way up, the hermitage at the foot of the cone, and the cone itself, looking very uncanny and awful in the midst of the glorious landscape. Opposite is the charming coast of Sorrento, with its villages (in clear weather I can see Landsberg singing at Castellamare) as far as the promontory of 'La Campanella,' so called from the bells which used to ring there to give warning of the approach of the Saracens. Then you have a bit of open sea, with Capri, then Castel del Uovo, the hill Pizzi Falcone, and below the

street of Sta. Lucia, which runs in a curve up to our house. The balcony is over the sea, and just under our feet is a fish-preserve, in which the anchovies for our dinner are caught fresh every day. If this is not enough, turn again to the left and behold the English fleet, three great three-deckers, looking as calm and majestic as if they had only come on purpose to add to the beauty of the scene, whereas they are really here to exercise a slight pressure upon the Neapolitan government on the question of Sicilian sulphur. Their boats are rowing with measured strokes backwards and forwards the whole day long, and the sea is alive with little skiffs, so that our eyes are constantly occupied. The intolerable noise of the streets is too far off to be disturbing, the only continuous sounds being the pleasantly monotonous beat of the oars, and the ripple of the waves as they break against the wall below. Here we have already spent three days, like princes in a fairy tale, quite by ourselves, so much so that we have not yet delivered any letters, except those at our banker's on the morning after our arrival, when Wilhelm found two letters—one from you, dear mother, and the other from Marianne and her children, containing, thank God! only good news. The Meuricoffre ladies have just called; they told me that this hotel was formerly the Prussian embassy, but through a caprice of the Countess L. it was exchanged for one in a far less beautiful situation. I am sure it must have been a very uncommon kind of wilfulness to induce a person to give up a position which it seems is almost unique even in Naples.

We go out in the morning, and have already seen much in these three days, but in the afternoon our balcony is in shade, and then I prefer it to any party of pleasure, so I write here, whilst Wilhelm and Sebastian draw. In the evenings there is a moon, just in the right position to cast its golden reflection on the sea, and then the scene is even more beautiful than by day; for besides the moon and its long track on the water, and the stars, we have the lights of the English fleet and those of the hermitage on Vesuvius, and the villages far and wide, whilst fishing-boats glide to and fro, disappearing and reappearing from behind the Castello, each carrying a pan of blazing pitch, the fiery glow

from which turns the moon and its reflection to pale silver. Lastly, lights are glittering in the Castello and on Pizzi Falcone, and a coronet of lights runs along the Sta. Lucia up to our house. —This morning, on the staircase of the museum, I met—whom do you think?—your friend Pauline Garcia, dear mother, now Mme. Viardot. I recognised her at once, and we were both delighted at meeting. It is a pity that she has only a few days longer to stay here, and a still greater pity that we were in Rome together for the last few days without knowing it.—Dear mother, for an answer to your question why our letters smell of musk I must refer you to the post office. They may perhaps have lain in the vicinity of some sweet love-letter, for no scents of that kind have come across our threshold, or even greeted our noses. Do believe that we are by this time really longing for home, and that we do not mean to remain here longer than necessary. We should both have preferred going home direct from Rome, so as to retain that scene in our minds undisturbed by later impressions, but we could not conscientiously not see Naples. It is a real pleasure now to be writing of our approaching meeting. Mind you all keep well, so that we may have a joyful welcome home!

Whit Monday, June 8.—To-day took place the festival of the Madonna dell' Arco, the subject of Robert's picture. We drove to see it seven miles into the country, through an indescribable turmoil the whole way. There were hundreds of vehicles, such as Robert painted, ornamented with green boughs, handkerchiefs, and ribbons, the people in them carrying sticks like forks, from which were suspended feathers, flowers, saints' pictures, baskets, spoons, and a thousand other articles, purchased at the fair near the church. Everybody was dressed in their best, and there was a running accompaniment of tambourines and castanettes, singing and shouting, all seasoned with the choking dust. Near the church the noise was deafening, and the crowd enormous; people were sitting in booths drinking, but I saw no excess. Many of the physiognomies and complexions were quite African; one girl especially, who was beating a tambourine and laughing, looked a perfect savage. In the church a man was crawling about on his knees and licking the

floor—a charming penance. We had our carriage driven into the shade, whilst Wilhelm walked about sketching. We agreed that this festival would form a most appropriate subject for a frieze, as it really does resemble a bacchanalian procession.

Tuesday, June 9.—This morning we went to the museum. The antique fragments—consisting of mosaics, representations from nature, of animals more especially, done with great truth and correctness, and paintings, such as pictures of houses and gardens, almost in the French style—offer materials for a complete history of art. Wilhelm was enchanted with the feeling for colour shown in many of them. You pass through a garden where all kinds of Pompeian fragments lie scattered among roses and other shrubs to the large room where that unwieldy ragamuffin the Farnese Hercules and the Farnese bull are not *placed*, but stowed away—an expression I am inclined to use with regard to everything in the museum. There seems to be no notion here of artistic arrangement, which, in such collections as those in the Vatican and at Munich, is in itself a work of art. We next visited the room containing the treasures found at Pompeii—a very womanly collection; and curiously enough there were more women there than in all the other rooms put together. Costly gold ornaments in the very best taste (our serpent-bracelets have been imitated from some here); kitchen utensils and household furniture of every description; provisions just as they were dug up; eggs, bread, wine, rice, oil, with the vessels in which they were kept; the purse taken from the hand of the skeleton called the wife of Diomed, which also wore handsome gold ornaments; and gems, cups, vases, many of them so much in the style resuscitated by Benvenuto Cellini that they might be taken for Florentine work of the sixteenth century. How impatient I am to see Pompeii itself! Then we went into the picture gallery. Raphael's well-known Holy Family is most beautiful! especially Sta. Elizabeth, the loveliest old woman, I am sure, that ever was painted, so pleasant-looking and gentle though really old. No engraving or copy can do justice to her face, just as there are fine shades of pronunciation in a language which no foreigner ever acquires. I stayed at home in the evening and read some French newspapers full of

discussions about the removal of Napoleon's ashes. Stepping out on the balcony afterwards into the moonlight, with the lights on the ships and all around, while nature seemed hushed to repose, I felt a disgust of newspapers such as I had never experienced before.

Thursday, *June* 11.—Bonirote was announced early and had coffee with us, so we have met him in the three principal cities—Venice, Rome, and Naples. He and two other painters have made the journey here in every possible mode of travelling, on foot, on donkey-back, and with a bad *vetturino*. We met again in the museum, where he walked about with us: first to the collection of antique glass and terra-cotta, which includes large statues in burnt clay, an immense collection of lamps, roof-tiles, water-pipes, and kitchen and household utensils. Two large glass vessels are still full, they do not know what of. Then we went to the bronzes from Pompeii and Herculaneum, the most interesting collection of all, to my mind. These do indeed strike one with admiration at the taste, imagination, and practical good-sense of the ancients, to say nothing of their wealth. Of such luxury I never dreamed; and when one sees that in a small provincial town like Pompeii the furniture was inlaid with silver, the kitchen utensils not tinned but *silvered*, and each article, however tiny, made in the most finished style and the most practical shape, one gains some idea of what the state of things must have been in contemporary Rome, Syracuse, and other capitals. This collection is well arranged, and therefore convenient to look at. Of course, like the other Pompeian collections, it increases daily as the excavations progress, and this state of growth adds to the interest. Among the things that specially caught my notice were two beautiful pails that had been sacred vessels in the temple, of which the handles when laid flat form an elegant border, inlaid with silver; also several seats for senators, and others of bronze with fine animals' heads, made so high that footstools must necessarily have been used with them. Iron bedsteads too, very narrow, as they were also used as sofas, and between 400 and 500 lamps, no two being alike, as even when three or four were suspended from *one* centre-piece they were all different. Most of them have high stands, fre-

quently imitations of trees, and all exceedingly elegant and pretty; others have an ingenious contrivance for taking them off the base, so as to make them more portable. The water vessels from the temples have elastic bronze handles, which can also be taken off and carried separately, besides a contrivance to prevent spilling. A tea-urn is made on a plan well worth imitating. A thousand other small objects have continued in use these 2,000 years nearly unchanged, such as locks and keys, thimbles, dice, ivory needles for sewing, illustrated theatre tickets of bone, spoons, portable cooking-stoves very prettily and elegantly constructed, and weighing scales and weights. The world did not look so very different then, after all, only everything had an elegance and a splendour entirely lacking in our utensils of the same kind. It is impossible to enumerate all the interesting things. Then follows the collection of vases, but to appreciate these properly requires a knowledge I do not possess of the distinguishing characteristics by which connoisseurs can assign each one to its native town or even factory; for instance, the vases of Nola are known by their peculiarly rich and delicate varnish. It is a topic, however, on which I do not like to speak, for, as I am guided merely by my own feeling of what is beautiful or the reverse, my judgment is of no value. It is, however, an enormous collection and most complete, numbers of the vases having been found in the tombs, which have proved the best and safest receptacles for them to this day. Several models of tombs are also exhibited here; one of a warrior from Paestum is painted inside in the same style as the vases. A whole cemetery was discovered here in Naples near the museum.

Lastly we visited the collection of bronze statues, also including many fine things; among others several life-size statues of consuls and women, a colossal horse's head, very magnificent, an entire horse of smaller size, from a quadriga on the front of the theatre at Herculaneum, the only part they have been able to put together again, a recumbent faun, a Mercury killing Argus, etc. A bishop had bells founded from the body of the horse belonging to the colossal head!

Towards evening, when the sky had cleared up after a violent

thunder-storm, we drove by the Toledo, a continual ascent the whole way, to Capo di Monte, where there are some charming country houses and a lovely view, the whole of Naples being spread out before you in all its size and splendour. St. Elmo has a remote likeness to Monte Mario, which I often used to abuse, but now long for every evening. We drove back under a glorious moon, going at a foot's pace down the Toledo, on account of the tiresome soldiers, who are an annoyance both day and night. If I were King of Naples I should find something better to do than spending my time in drilling and manœuvring. It was exceptionally beautiful on our balcony that evening, the moon being just opposite over the coast of Sorrento, and throwing its golden light right across the sea. Then the light divided, the broad sea near the shore being separated by a large mass of shade from the glittering sheet of gold beyond, which was not unlike the look of glow-worms *en masse* as one sees them on the Pincio. As the boats glided through the expanse of light the waves round them began to sparkle even before they reached it, and when they entered the shadow they drew a long broad furrow of light behind them. Still more wonderful, even in the darkest part of the sea each little black hull had its brilliant wake of phosphorescence. The three little firemen we see every night appearing and disappearing behind the Castello were not wanting either. With such surroundings, the commonest events seem like fairy-tales. If we had but had these apartments in Rome, where our little room used to be so overcrowded! Here, with so much space at our command, we live like princes in an enchanted palace.

Letter and Diary.

Dear Mother and Brothers and Sisters,—Last week we made grand excursions to Ischia and Vesuvius. On Sunday we took the steamer to Ischia, a delightful sail, though the slow boat takes upwards of three hours. We passed Posilippo, Nisida, Puzzuoli, Baiæ, and Cape Miseno, with an old watch-tower on its summit: and, leaving Capri and the coast of Sorrento to our left, sailed alongside of Procida. A large building, the

bishop's palace, stands on the little promontory, which you see first, and the town, which lies between the sea and the hill, has a peculiarly southern, almost oriental, appearance. The costume of the women resembles that of the modern Greeks, a few of whom we saw at the 'Madonna dell' Arco.' Close by Procida, but higher and larger in every way, is Ischia. At every minute the coast, promontories, islands, and villages meet the eye at different angles, and dissolving views of the most interesting kind followed each other in such rapid succession that we had hardly time to take them in, although the boat went slowly. Vesuvius with its two peaks dominates the scene from all points. On our arrival at Ischia we were tormented by a double set of touters, the boats which pretended to take us on shore but did not approach within ten yards of it, and a mob, consisting of half the population and all the donkeys, howling, shouting, and fighting for the honour of conveying us to land. We stepped out of the boat on to the donkeys' backs, and so rode out of the sea and straight on. Ischia presents an even more southern appearance than Naples, the rocks being covered with a wild and profuse vegetation of Indian figs, in actual trees, aloes, pomegranates, and vines; between we had continual glimpses of the bluest of seas and the whitest of houses and vineyard walls. We did, indeed, feel far away from the Kreuzberg.

We had an excellent breakfast and then rested, for it was very hot, and my courage failed me at the thought of riding round the island just at noon. In the afternoon we rode about a little, up hill and down, between the walls of the vineyard, without any shade, but always surrounded by a marvellously profuse vegetation, which clothes the rocks and forms the foreground of all the lovely views. By the time we reached the port I was completely knocked up, and we had to wait over an hour amongst the swarms of lazzaroni. At five we went on board again, and had a delightful sail back in the cool of the evening, seeing the sun set and the moon rise, the latter at first looking like a sort of night-cap on the top of the hills, until it rose higher and shed its magic light over the sea. We came home very tired. Naples is a diabolical town, and the dust and noise, the driving about and thronging of people, kill me. A

day's rest, however, set me all right again and made me fit for our excursion to Vesuvius, which we had carefully planned for Sebastian's birthday (which fell luckily only one day after the full moon), as we wanted him to retain a lasting recollection of the day on which he completed his tenth year. The way lies through Portici, a large place joining on to Resina. Here we had to take horses, as there were not enough donkeys, and a most fatiguing ride began; for the first two hours it is all up hill between vineyards, over the walls of which peep pomegranates, oranges, and figs, and all is very fertile and beautiful. Then we reached the lava, riding over that of last year, which overwhelmed so many vineyards, and left traces still visible in the up-rooted trees and blackened ground; it is not yet quite cold. Then followed a bit of most disagreeable road, over stone of the same kind as that which buried Herculaneum, and on which Portici is built, but at length we reached the plateau on which stands the house of the so-called hermit, and a group of fine trees. This spot already commands a lovely view; you see the islands distinctly and in their right proportions, for Ischia looks quite large by the side of little Procida, Cape Miseno, Posilippo, and the whole of that coast as well as the other side as far as Sorrento, with the exception of Castellamare. Here we rested a few minutes, and then went on. Soon there was not a living creature left, and we entered upon the haunted region, our guides pointing out to right and left the different lava-streams which had descended in such and such years. At the foot of the cone we dismounted, and up this last ascent Wilhelm made me be carried. It is certainly a saving to one's legs and one's lungs, but if any one imagines it a comfortable way of mounting this Hill of Tartarus he is very much mistaken; *anzi*, being dragged up in this manner is very anxious work, for even the practised feet of the bearers are continually slipping among the loose stones and lava on the almost perpendicular ascent, and I cannot deny that my heart was in my boots more than once. This torture lasted nearly an hour, and then we found ourselves on the summit in Satan's headquarters, a stony cindery plain, from which you see the smoke rising. The higher cone at this moment (for it is continually changing

its shape) was on our left, and we did not go up it. We approached the crater with an indescribable feeling of curiosity, and gazed into it with amazement and horror. What a diabolic mess! The sulphurous smell, the colours such as you see nowhere else in nature, green, yellow, red, and blue, all poisonous hues, and the ashy gray at the bottom of the cauldron, the smoke, now thick, now thin, rising from all the crevices, and enveloping everything while it conceals nothing—all this, changing with every step, made up a spectacle of horror. On all sides too jut out the craters of former eruptions, one of which on the opposite side of the crater we climbed up, and were rewarded by a prospect of overwhelming beauty—the bay of Naples, the islands, the lovely bend of the coast at Castellamare, the towns and villages as far as Campanella, with the rocky peaks behind them, Torre' dell Annunziata, and the white road leading to Pompeii—all this we gazed upon for the first time, with a feeling almost of awe, from that gruesome eminence. Turn round and you see at your feet a wide crater, that of 1834, with beyond it a wall of jagged rock, formed by the eruption that destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum, and beyond that the innumerable villages in the plain, the whole bounded by the mountain-chain of the Abruzzi. Turn again to the left, facing the sun, and there rises a dismal mountain of yellow-green sulphur and lava, which realises all one's ideas of the infernal regions. The sun had set in a crimson glow which faintly tinged the smoke, the fire gleamed out between the stones and fissures, and some places were too hot to stand upon. And yet the volcano is unusually quiet now, for the last eruption was a year and a half ago. After sunset began our difficult retreat. I had not the courage to let them carry me down the cone, and preferred sacrificing my feet; but you have no idea what this descent is. They chose the side which has fewer stones mixed with the loose ashes than the side we came up, but it is a fearful business. We were quite smothered by the smoke, and kept sinking up to our knees in the ashes, which filled our shoes at every step, so that we could hardly drag our feet along, as, wading, panting, and stumbling, we made our way. I could not get on, so the others got a good start of me,

and I was left far behind with my guide, pitch darkness set in, and I learnt what fear was! At last, trembling with fatigue, I reached the others. Although this worst part of the way takes only ten minutes to go down (we were an hour going up), I assure you it was a ten minutes I shall never forget. It was now night, but we stumbled on for some time, till we found our horses, which carried us to the hermitage, where we rested a while in the open air. The moon had risen, and the night was mild and beautiful; we ate the cold supper we had brought with us, sitting round a table of stone, drank some Lacrymæ Christi, and then rode down to Resina, where we found our carriage. We were back in Naples by half past twelve, and I assure you the sight of houses, carriages, chairs, and, last but not least, my bed, was more grateful than I can say. One learns to appreciate these institutions after making acquaintance with the old gentleman and his domestic arrangements. But it was an impression never to be forgotten!

Beyond the principal sights, I think I shall leave Naples as ignorant as a goose, for I am always glad not to be obliged to leave our quiet, cool, pleasant balcony. The town is to me terrible, and I am inclined to believe that it is affected by the proximity of Mount Vesuvius. Beautiful as it is, I should not care to live here, whereas for Rome we sigh every day in spite of all the attractions that surround us. We both feel that it has stolen too much of our hearts for us to be able to enjoy anything else after it. When once back at home with you, we shall find our hearts in their right places again; but here we are only half ourselves, and that half is the eyes rather than the soul. You are right, dear Rebecca, in discerning in my letters the old story of the man who forgot himself at Rome. One thing I cannot understand, and that is that you find people there on whom it all makes no impression whatever. To any one of mind or of cultivated taste, even though he be but a *dilettante*, Rome must be inexpressibly interesting. The mere dandy alone has no part or lot in the life there, and I have myself met amiable individuals of that kind who did not know how to get through the day. Ah! forgive me if I weary you, but I have been turning over my Roman diary to-day, and it

has put me quite out of conceit with Naples; I feel indeed that my life is still bound up with Rome. *Ach! es war wohl schöne Zeit!* so I have said and sung a thousand times lately. It needed all our strength of mind to tear ourselves away, and now we are sorry we did leave, and wish we had stayed; but at the same time we long for home, where, amid all our dear surroundings, we shall live over again that delightful time in the endeavour to make you sharers in it. But enough of Rome! Regretting it can do no good either to you or to myself, for you have never been there, and I cannot go back. We shall soon meet again, and then the year of separation will be over, but a year of life as well!—*La vita fugge e non s' arresta un' ora*—and never was life dearer to me than it is now.

Letter and Diary.

Naples: July 10, 1840.

Dear Mother,—We returned in the evening of the day before yesterday from a six days' excursion, and only received the day before starting your letter of the 8th, with the particulars of the king's death, which interested us much. The fact we had heard before. We shall find many changes: may they be for the best!

We started on our excursion *à la student*, with one carpet-bag, one garment, and so forth, but not with one horse, for we had to take innumerable donkeys and several boats, besides apparatus of various kinds for riding, driving, and carrying. The first was the only day which brought adventures. In the morning the sea was calm, so we started in a four-oared boat for Capri, a distance generally done in four hours; but when we were half way a contrary wind arose, and after sailing for three hours the boatmen declared that it was impossible to reach Capri. We then decided to make for Sorrento, the wind being in that direction, but after sailing straight on for about an hour the wind all of a sudden chopped round again, we had to shorten sail, and matters became desperate. The rowers struggled against the waves, but could make no way, and at three o'clock we were still at the same spot as we were at twelve. The men got tired, the waves ran high, we were covered with

the salt-spray, the cords of the oars kept breaking, so that we had to stop every minute, and the tossing gave us qualms both of terror and sea-sickness. At first we were driven nearly on to Meta, which was too far to the left, and then we got to Massa, much too far to the right. It was anything but pleasant, especially when the men called for wine to support them under their exertions, and still more so when they gave up their favourite ejaculation, 'Maccaro,' which generally carries a Neapolitan through anything, and began to invoke the 'Santissima Madonna.' For some moments I thought it was all over with us, and read in imagination a polite letter from Meuricoffre, informing the house of Mendelssohn & Co. of the loss of the *aimable famille* Hensel. At last, after eight hours' constant exertion, we succeeded in reaching the promontory below Sorrento, under the shelter of which we sailed safely along the coast. It was very pleasant passing so close to the beautiful shore, with its caves opening to the sea, its natural arches almost like Gothic architecture, and splendid vegetation, especially after our escape from a very real danger. In the midst of it all, our fatigue and hunger were forgotten. At last we arrived safely in the port of Sorrento, but looking almost like pickled pork, for our faces and hands were covered with a briny crust, and the sun had turned us as red as if we had been dipped in saltpetre. We stayed at Sorrento till Thursday, waiting for a favourable wind for Capri, and made in the meantime excursions on horseback to various points with beautiful views (the hills are densely covered with myrtle in full bloom), but the weather continued bad. The sea looked gray and angry, and when on Friday morning we found still the same storms, dust, and sultry heat, we gave up Capri for good, and went on to Amalfi. Crossing the range of hills behind Sorrento, we turned our backs upon a glorious view of the Bay of Naples and all its islands, and faced towards the Gulf of Salerno with the Islands of the Sirens, and wending our weary steps downwards, past the boldest and most grotesquely shaped rocks to the sea, we embarked in a flat little boat, which roused my apprehensions anew, though happily in vain. This sail was beautiful beyond description, the coast the whole way being lovely; we also had

continual views of Capri and the Islands of the Sirens. Right out into the sea jut enormous rocks full of caves, and eminences, covered at the top with villages, at the base with fishermen's cottages. Rounding the last point, you come upon Amalfi, exquisitely situated on a hill sloping down to the water's edge. We walked up at once to the most curious inn perhaps in the whole world, a Franciscan monastery, which was emptied a short time ago and turned into a tavern. The *frati* are, however, soon coming back again, so we were fortunate in being among the latest guests. From every window, and still more from the terraces where we spent the evening, are lovely views of the sea, the town, and the hills. The fine cloisters, the paths in the form of a cross, a large cave in the rocks, the little sleeping-cells, each holding but one bed, in true monkish style—all were out of the way, and increased our pleasure in the splendid scenery. Walter, my boy, guess what we had for supper at Amalfi? If you give it up, ask your mother to help you, and if she gives it up, I will tell you—the first potatoes in their skins (*Pellkartoffeln*). We fell to with such appetites that the waiter looked on in astonishment, and when we had emptied the large dish asked whether we wanted more *patate*, at which we all burst out laughing. Sebastian, however, was quite moved, and said he felt as if we were in Berlin. I could not quite agree with him. To get from our convent to the town we had to pass through the strangest places—flights of stairs, dark passages, mills, queer little alleys, all leading to the market-place and church with its many steps, of which Catel made such a beautiful picture. Early on Saturday Wilhelm walked up alone to Ravello, a little town high up in the mountains, which is said to contain some very interesting architecture, but which was pronounced un-get-at-able for Sebastian and me. We then had a delightful sail along the coast to Salerno, the sea being like glass. When it behaves like that it is really the greatest possible pleasure to be on it. The cathedral of Salerno, a very ancient building, must once have been splendid. The porch with its many arches and ancient pillars, all varied, is as bright and beautiful as anything one could wish to see, but terribly disfigured by the bad taste of last century. Inside,

the coarse stupid pilasters no doubt conceal beautiful columns, as in the Lateran. The pulpits for the epistle and gospel are fine, and similar in style, though still more beautiful, to those of San Lorenzo, of which parts of the mosaic pavement also reminded me. If, as seems probable, the whole church was formerly lined with mosaic, it must have been really magnificent. In the sacristy, or rather in a lumber-room which looks like the wardrobe of a theatre, is a splendid ivory altar with scenes from the Bible. The pillars of the door are supported by lions.

On Sunday we made an excursion to Pæstum, saw the famous temple, and the view of the Gulf of Salerno—unfortunately one cannot stay long for fear of malaria—and drove on the same evening to Castellamare, where we greeted our old friend Vesuvius, then looking beautiful in the sunset.

On Monday morning we rode on donkeys to Pompeii under a thick and lowering sirocco. This is one of those sights which impress one with awe, and, if I may be allowed the expression, with solemn curiosity. None of us could speak except in a low tone. Having seen the crater beforehand, one understands perfectly, when looking up from the streets of the town itself, how likely the event was to happen. Of course you see the mountain on the opposite side from that seen from Naples, and the cone is to your left, while that fearful wall which was formed when Pompeii was destroyed meets the eye at once; in fact, Vesuvius, like some grim phantom, frowns down upon the silent streets, and nothing can be imagined more awe-inspiring than the aspect of this stern destroyer, still armed with the same power of doing mischief, while at his feet are the speaking witnesses of the horrid crime he committed eighteen centuries ago. The mounds of small stones and ashes round the excavated houses complete the vivid picture of the dreadful event to such a degree that you feel as if it happened only yesterday, to people with whom you had been personally acquainted. There are many spots from which a splendid picture might be taken of Vesuvius with Pompeii in the foreground, but it has never been done that I know of. We passed between the avenues of weeping-willows to the street of tombs, on many of which the marble monuments are so well preserved that they might have

left the workshops to-day. In the house of Diomed there is a great cellar in which the impression of the skull and arms of a skeleton may still be seen, as it was found leaning against the wall. There were many skeletons in it, and the poor people must have died a cruel death, for the ashes could only have made their way slowly through the narrow holes at the top, so their torture must have been prolonged. The architecture of the houses is so well known that I need say nothing about it; but I am bringing home a very faithful water-colour sketch of the so-called 'House of the Poet,' by Bonirote. The central court, open to the sky, with the *pergola* supported by pillars, which one sees at almost all the houses, is charming. The paintings did not altogether please me, as I thought them wanting in taste and style, and in this Wilhelm agreed with me. I do not care in the least for the uninteresting wreaths and meagre pilasters, which are repeated in all directions, neither do I appreciate the peculiar red of most of the walls; all their vessels, however, are absolutely beautiful, and in a noble style. The grottos of mosaic and shells I thought almost ugly, but most of the pavements are elegant and in good taste. The public buildings, the Forum, Basilica, etc., are grand, especially when compared with the small dwelling-houses, obviously the homes of those who spent most of their lives in the open air; the theatres for tragedy and comedy are quite distinct in their construction, and both in a good state of preservation. I should like to know what the ancients used the pit for besides holding the band of music, for that could not have surely occupied the whole space, seeing that Spontini was not their *maestro di capella*. The absurd *ciceroni* maintain that otherwise it was empty, which I cannot believe: they were much too careful about economising space for that. The amphitheatre outside the town is also well preserved. A great many things puzzle me. The vessels exhibited in the museum are in no sort of proportion to the number of houses now uncovered, and for one thing there is scarcely any furniture. What has become of that? Did the inhabitants save much at the time? That is scarcely probable, as the eruption came on almost suddenly. Did they come back afterwards, and rake among the ashes for

their things? In that case why did they not make the uncovered houses habitable again? I cannot accept either of these explanations. Pompeii was visited by a serious earthquake about ten years before its destruction. Did part of the inhabitants then leave the town and never come back? This also is difficult to believe; because those who fled would have been in all likelihood the more wealthy inhabitants, and it is the common household furniture which is completely wanting, whilst there are plenty of objects of luxury; besides, in that case the houses would not all have been found standing. I should like to talk to some authority about this, say Professor Zahn [1]—after whose name in the travellers' book at Amalfi somebody has added 'is hollow.'

In the afternoon Landsberg gave a donkey *fête*, and took us for a ride through a beautiful forest, to some charming points of view (at all the finest spots there are convents). At eight we got into our carriage and drove back to Naples. It was a *fête* day, and there was a great hubbub at Torre dell' Annunziata and Torre del' Greco. You would never believe how these little places swarm with inhabitants. At Portici we found fireworks, illuminations—the old gentleman, and his grandmother. I shall encounter no more fatigues, but lead a peaceful life till the moment comes for us to embark. Some remnants of our Roman society have turned up here, and more are expected within the next few days; but altogether we lead a very quiet life. Farewell to you all. Oh, how I am looking forward to our meeting!—Yours, Fanny.

They had originally planned to go to Sicily together, but through the unpunctuality of the Italian steamers (two had broken down, and the third was doing the whole service) the time of their departure had been so much delayed that Fanny began to dread the heat, and it was decided that she should remain with her son at Naples, while Wilhelm undertook the journey alone.

[1] German for tooth.

Extract from a Letter of Fanny's.

July 11.

. . . A thousand greetings, my beloved husband! In spite of the uncertainty of this ever reaching you, I must write in order to keep up intercourse of some kind with you. Where are you? What are you doing? And are you at work only with the eye, or does the hand take its part also? Do not fret if you are only seeing, for that with you is never lost time; there being no stony ground in your composition, everything bears fruit thirty- and forty-fold. I regret more and more that we did not from the first make the *salon* our usual sitting-room. You would not believe how delightful it is, and what a lazy, pleasant life I am leading. I am glad that we shall still have five days here together; missing you so much keeps me down now, but if we two—a couple of God's loveliest thoughts—were to lead this pagan existence (or godlike, if you will) for any length of time, my spirits would become irrepressible. It is never too hot. Even while the sun is on us I need only close half the shutter, for the sweet breeze from the sea is so refreshing that we gain more than we lose by admitting the sun with it, and during the whole afternoon I sit outside and spoil my digestion over bad books. Gounod has come, and wishes to be kindly remembered to you, as do Bousquet and Normand. They all come and see me pretty often, and so does Madame D., whose society is very acceptable; *faute de mieux*, I like, especially while you are away, to have at least *one* woman with all my young men, and in spite of her coquetry I think she is of the same mind, for she cordially desires my company. And she comes to see *me*, whereas with all the other ladies I know here I should have to go to them, which is not nearly so comfortable. This evening we propose making a grand aquatic excursion with Madame D., Bousquet, and Gounod. I have been once already on the water with Sebastian as my page, and Jette as my *dame d'honneur*, to Queen Joan's palace, which looks much finer in the evening than it does by daylight, there seems so much more mystery and romance about it. How often we thought of you! How much I miss not having you here, to

share all my pleasure! not but what I do share them all with you in mind; and, believe me, my enjoyment is never perfect when you are not there. I hope you do not object to my making these excursions: I cannot well refuse without seeming prudish and ridiculous to the young people. Good-bye, dear husband, drink Sicily to the dregs, and when you are quite satisfied come back to your Fan and your Bap, two people who love you heartily.

P.S.—'She cannot finish,' but must send her love once more, and yet once more. Why should this paper travel to Palermo with any space left blank? I began Jules Janin's 'Voyage en Italie' yesterday. By the time he gets to Florence his enthusiasm has evaporated, and he turns back again. The book contains some pretty bits, but also such *grosses bêtises*, that for the first time in my life I could not refrain from making a remark or two in pencil on the margin—a thing I have never done before to a book that does not belong to me. Now I cannot boast of this again any more than I can of never having stood on a chair in church after that day *ai Greci* in Rome. *Addio, carissimo mio!*

Diary.

I often think now of how soon I shall be far away from all this beauty, and how many years it will be before I revisit it. Certain combinations of plants one only sees here in the South have impressed themselves particularly upon my memory; for instance, aloes growing in the grass, as at the Villa Mills, vines among the olive-trees, so symbolical in their beauty and productiveness of the fertile South, stone-pines and cypress-trees, bearing no fruit, and serving no special purpose, but so beautiful, so Roman, so historical, so suggestive. I cannot recall without emotion the lovely groups of pines and cypresses which I used to see from the Villa Medici, in the gardens of the Villa Ludovisi, the very look of them is associated with so many happy days. The palm-tree generally stands alone, and is seen at its best so, for each one forms a group in itself, and seems to need, indeed to tolerate, no accessories. It is the embodiment of the solitude,

the mystery, and the marvellousness of the East. O beautiful Italy! How rich thou hast made me! What treasures I am bearing home from thee in my heart! But shall I be able to trust my memory entirely? Will my recollections be as vivid as my impressions were?

Letter Home.

Naples: July 22, 1840.

Yesterday afternoon, at two o'clock, my dear husband came back safe and sound from a nineteen days' trip to Sicily. Now you know the great secret which has been weighing so heavily on my womanly heart. He would not tell you about it till he had returned in safety, for fear you should be anxious about him, being, as he was, in Palermo for the *fête* of Sta. Rosalia during the most intense heat, and about us, who were here alone. Not that we were in any danger here—we were as safe in our *salon* as in Abraham's bosom, but I confess I did feel a trifle uneasy about my husband myself, though, thank God, he has come home well and happy, and not even more sunburnt than is becoming. He has been as busy as ever in the short time, made a number of nice acquaintances, taken many portraits, sketches, and studies, and returns charmed with the beauty of the country. He visited Palermo and Messina, from whence he made a trip to Taormina. I am very sorry now that I did not go with him. If we had started from Rome one day earlier, I should probably have gone, for a boat sailed that very day, and the next, the one Wilhelm went by, did not leave till July 2. In the meantime the heat had become intense, and my courage failed me. In the villas and gardens round Palermo there are no oranges, they are considered too common, but pisang, palms, and castor-oil-trees. The sugarcane and other exotic plants grow in the open air.

He liked the Sicilians very much. They are said to be quite a different race from the Neapolitans, whom they detest and despise to a degree, and are liberal, cultivated, hospitable, and wealthy. Wilhelm says he never saw a finer display of horses and carriages than at Palermo—it beats London. He sketched the statue of Sta. Rosalia, which Goethe describes so

prettily. One of his *compagnons de voyage*, Prince Pignatelli, a Sicilian, came to see us yesterday evening, and told me how astonished he had been at Wilhelm's drawing. He took several portraits on the steamer in spite of the tossing, and had greatly astonished the queer little Sicilian as well as the rest of the party. Now I know what it feels like to be looking out for the return of some dear one by sea. My balcony commands the view of the whole gulf, so I could see the ship thirty miles off, beginning with the top of the mast. As she was expected to arrive by seven in the morning, I was up at half past five, with my telescope directed to the passage between Capri and Sorrento —the clock struck ten, twelve, but no steamer was to be seen, till at last, about two in the afternoon, she appeared on the horizon. The long waiting, the excitement and impatience, combined with the fact that I had received no news for a fortnight, put me in quite a silly state of anxiety. I do call myself silly, for Sebastian argued with me very forcibly, 'Dear mother, if the ship had come without father, you would have good reason to be alarmed, but now you have none whatever.' The dear little fellow was quite right, but I went on exciting myself in this foolish way till I heard the welcome noise of the paddles. The Neapolitans, never to be relied upon, do not think of keeping time in the departure of their packets.

We shall be delighted to find Felix at Leipzig. Our tour will then be like a serpent biting its own tail. The two hundred men singing his music on the Platz must have been splendid. I should have liked to have been present at the festival. I am quite charmed with the celebration at Strasburg also, of which there is a minute description in the *Débats*. What a real people's festival it has been![1]

[1] These festivities were in honour of the anniversary of the invention of printing. Leah wrote to Fanny: 'The weather was fortunately favourable for the music in the market-place at Leipzig, and the "Hymn of Praise" in the church on the following day is said to have been a very successful performance. Neukomm was less lucky at Mayence, where the performance was twice interrupted by pouring rain. Try to get the papers of the 30th, for it is interesting to see how universally the festival was celebrated throughout Germany, except in Prussia and Austria. At Strasburg all the chief notabilities were expected to take part. Felix wrote to me on the 22nd, after the first rehearsal in the market-place: "I take my stand by the lamp-post,

Now farewell, you dear people! This is, I hope, my last despatch from Naples, and the next will be dated from somewhere much nearer. Pray for a good journey for us, as we pray to find you all well and happy. And now, adieu from Naples.

Extract from a Letter of Rebecca's to Cécile.

Berlin: July 24, 1840.

. . . We had a letter from the Hensels the day before yesterday: they still intend starting by steamer on the 26th, and in about a month please God they will be with us. I cannot tell you how glad I am. Meanwhile our few days with Felix were delightful, and we thank you very much for sparing him to us for so long. That we talked occasionally of you and the little ones you are doubtless aware from the tingling of your ears. But for fear you shall be jealous of Madame Löwe, Herr Kütemann, or anybody else in the world, let me assure you that Felix, although he seemed to be enjoying himself here, and saw how greedy we were of his society, made rather a wry face, actually and mentally, when David, we, and his own good sense prevailed upon him to stay over Wednesday evening, and come home to you a few hours later. I will not say that there are no husbands who love their wives as much as Felix loves you, but *I* have never seen one so much in love before. However, I can understand it, for though I am not your husband I am a little in love with you myself.

Letter from Fanny to the Family.

Monday afternoon, August 10.

I am sitting for the last time on the glorious balcony looking at the view. Our boxes are packed and just being carried off, and to-morrow we start. I cannot understand how it is that I have not yet shed a tear at the thought of leaving so soon, whilst in Rome I cried regularly every day for a month before

and David is a hundred and thirty yards off with the second orchestra. It is an enormous business, over 200 men, twenty trombones, sixteen trumpets, etc. Spontini himself would scarcely say *Encore deux violons* this time."'

our departure. If it was not for the long journey before us, I should even be glad. To-day we dined with the Duc de Montebello. There were present Herr Decaitel, some gentlemen I did not know, and Kemble with his daughter. She is very ugly and was abominably dressed, which made her look most ungraceful; but she speaks French very well, and seems to be more clever than amiable, as she was rather sharp and altogether unattractive. The duke is really a very amiable man, with refined and pleasant manners, and I like him much. The duchess is kind too, and very agreeable, and does all she can to remind one as little as possible of her English origin. In the afternoon we sat for some time under the beautiful portico, and Miss Kemble sang. Her voice is fine, but, like her person, without charm. This is my unbiassed opinion, for she made herself very agreeable to me. I also played several times on the fine Erard, and had an appreciative audience, although unfortunately I did not show myself to advantage, for I felt weak and scarcely able to manage the splendid instrument. I could hardly get through Bach's concerto. We then took a cordial farewell of the kind family, and got home in the exquisite moonlight about twelve o'clock, worn out with the heat, which has been excessive the last few days.

Letter to the Family.

Genova la superba. Croce di Malta: August 14, 1840.

'Thalatta! Thalatta!' I exclaim in exultation, not however at having the sea before me, but at having left it behind. If any one thing in the world can be extremely pleasant or the reverse, it is travelling by sea. Pleasant undoubtedly for those who, like my husband, can take likenesses, eat, drink, and find themselves generally *comme le pont neuf*, but decidedly unpleasant for those who, like myself, have been spending one whole day in Leghorn and four hours in Genoa, with all the furniture in the room dancing waltzes, and *die ganze betrunkene Welt sich um die rothe Weltgeistnase drehen sehn.* That I may not exaggerate, however, I must own that by dint of lying flat I managed pretty tolerably, but the whole time we were on board I could not stand or even sit up for five minutes.

I must take a rest after the exertion of this half-page, for my ideas are dancing country dances with the words I write. The main thing is, we are off, and hope to continue our journey without delay. You will most likely receive us with the same remark good Mme. Beer addressed to her son, 'Michel, how ugly you have grown!' Be prepared, for you know that Italy is not a country from which people return either younger or handsomer. We have had our fill of travelling, that is certain, and when the mouse has had enough the flour tastes bitter. The begging and extortion, which are indeed worse here than elsewhere, have never irritated me so much before, and I am longing for my honest fatherland.

We had good weather for our voyage at first, but the two last nights were so stormy, especially the last, that I could not close my eyes from fright. When I did fall asleep from fatigue, I dreamt quite vividly that we were all sitting round the table at your house, dear mother, and I was just saying, 'So the long-wished-for moment has come at last,' when I was awoke by the creaking and groaning of the ship, to find the table in the cabin upset and myself tossing about most uncomfortably on the Mediterranean. I shall long remember how pleasant it was to see the first streak of dawn. Shortly before arriving at Genoa I got up to see the town, but could not remain on my feet, and had to lie down on deck and get a casual glimpse now and then. The situation is splendid, and the town, almost like Naples, runs high up the hill.

Diary.

Genoa: August 16.

Towards evening I took a little walk with Wilhelm and Sebastian, though it was raining and a sirocco blowing. We have not yet seen the sun here. We went to the cathedral, which is Lombardo-Gothic (*Mem.*—When I write my history of art I shall dub it 'the ticking-style,' on account of its stripes). But all these façades have some peculiarity or other. Here, for instance, there are at one corner three pillars quite disconnected from the building. In the Brignole palace there are some splendid pictures. Wilhelm was enchanted with one by

Rubens, depicting himself and his wife surrounded by fauns and satyrs, but it was rather too indecent for me. A beautiful picture by Palma Vecchio, the Adoration of the Magi, is one of the finest of his that I have seen. There are also portraits by Titian, Rubens, and Vandyke; by the latter, an equestrian one life-size of the Marchese Brignole. All the great families here seem to have been painted by him, for in all the palaces one sees the owners as large as life and quite as fat, with their fine white hands hanging down, standing, sitting, riding, with and without children, in enormous ruffs, and the women in very ugly dresses, which must have been the fashion of the period. From thence we went up to the Villa Negri, which has a lovely view. The Marchese Negri seems to be a Genoese patriot, for he has busts of all his famous countrymen—Columbus, Paganini, etc., and on a garden-house is the inscription *Alla memoria di Washington*. In this summer-house the old gentleman received us very kindly, and showed us all his numerous curiosities—Napoleon's cane and snuff-box, a knife and fork belonging to Benvenuto Cellini, a pretty old harp, and other articles of the same kind. The beautiful garden with its view is, however, the best of all. We dined in the town afterwards, and I saw the account of Louis Bonaparte's landing and subsequent capture at Boulogne. What a crack-brained and detestable man!

The travellers arrived on August 18 at Milan.

Diary.

Drove to the Brera, where I was glad to see some of my old friends again. The moment we entered the first rooms I perceived, to my great delight, that I had learnt a good deal since we were here before, for Luini's beautiful frescoes, which I hardly thought worth looking at the first time, now pleased me very much. They represent the history of Mary, and have been cut out from their original position probably in the church of Lugano. The collection is exceedingly rich in large pictures of the Venetian school, especially Paul Veronese's and Bonifacio's. By the former there are a bishop and several priests, with a beautiful

head of an old man bending over a book held by a page in front, which shows much more earnestness and dignity than is customary with the jolly old fellow; also an enormous altarpiece with wings, the Adoration of the Magi in the middle, and saints and angels holding all sorts of bass-viols and trumpets on the sides, exactly in Paul Veronese's style. Yesterday I thought how like he was to Handel, with his broad masses, modish flourishes, and constantly repeated effects, which, however, never fail to produce as much astonishment and emotion as at first. They are both splendid men! By Bonifacio there is a Christ in the house of the publican, with people eating and drinking, and a child feeding a dog to the left; this picture I liked the first time I saw it. A beautiful Mantegna has an Evangelist writing in the middle, and male and female saints around, all small figures on a gold ground. This picture I imagine belongs to his first period, when he still followed the old school; but what an advance it shows already on earlier work! He was a great man! I say nothing of the Sposalizio, for everything possible has been said about that already. Francia's Annunciation did not impress me as much as last year. Then there is an extraordinary picture by Bonifacio. It appears to be intended for the discovery of Moses, but the composition is out of all bounds. Ladies and gentlemen are sitting eating and drinking and conversing familiarly, a stout cook stands by the side of the princess, a cask of wine is being tapped, a band is playing, etc. By Bellini there is a large picture in the same odd, splendid, and original style as those in Venice. It represents a saint preaching at Constantinople, in front of St. Sophia, to a congregation of the queerest-looking Turks and Mamelukes, with turbans almost like houses, white cloaks and curious costumes altogether. The church is very like St. Mark's in Venice. At the back are slender spires, with a winding staircase running up the outside of one of them, and white houses. The light in this picture is very truthfully rendered. It is impossible to form an idea of the style of these Venetians without seeing them. Then we went again to the church of St. Ambrogio, as Wilhelm wanted to make a slight sketch of it for a composition he has in his mind. It is a beautiful church, and might be, as

Wilhelm says, so easily restored to its former dignity by the removal of a few ornaments and a little dirt.

Thursday, August 20.—This morning at seven Wilhelm went with Sebastian to the cathedral to draw. I followed them later, and was inexpressibly delighted to be there again; it impressed me much more than before. Last year we came here from Bamberg and Ratisbon, where we had been seeing grand buildings in a similar style. Now we have been seeing the Italian churches, mostly basilicas, which I also admire, St. Peter's, and the many imitations of it, the German-Italian style, and all the rest, each of which you like by turns when you see them; but to-day I felt fully convinced that this is the true style of ecclesiastical architecture and the finest church in Italy, and it was built by a German. What a glorious thing is the genius of man! God Himself has not created anything more wonderful!

Letter and Diary.

Airolo: August 24, 1840.

Unless I make haste I shall not be able to begin this letter south of the Alps, for in a few hours we shall have crossed them, and be spending the night at Ursern, where we all slept once before, in the year 1822. In the afternoon of the 20th we left Milan for Como, intending to call on Hiller at once, but heard that his house was out of the town on the shore of the lake, and it was then too late to get so far. Next morning we hired a boat and rowed out to call on him. Much delighted, he got into our boat and accompanied us on our excursion to the Villa d'Este, where Queen Caroline of England used to live. He then invited us to spend the rest of the day with him, and took us in the afternoon (by water again) to the Villa Pliniana, where, close to the well mentioned in Pliny's letters, we had a nice merry supper, in a public hall on the shore of the lake. The one describing the well, which ebbs and flows every three hours, is written up on the wall in Latin and Italian. We took special notice of the passage in which he recommends his friend to sit down near the water and eat and drink, and followed his advice to the letter, 1800 years after he gave it. During supper

Hensel took Hiller's portrait. The next day, at Bellinzona, one of those events happened to us which form the great interest of travelling and impress themselves indelibly on one's memory. We arrived in the evening, and our dinner was served in a room where an elderly gentleman was already sitting at his meal. He addressed us kindly and courteously, and we soon perceived, in the course of conversation, that we were talking to a well-educated and distinguished man. When we had finished dinner and were going to depart, he inquired what nation we belonged to, and where we lived, and hearing that we came from Berlin questioned us about Humboldt, whose acquaintance we were able to claim. When Wilhelm asked him if he should take any message to Humboldt, and from whom, he answered: *Io sono un uomo infelicemente conosciuto—il conte Gonfalonieri.* At this name I was, of course, not a little touched.[1] When he heard our name we found that he was perfectly well acquainted with us and our whole family, through the Arconatis; they had lauded the hospitality of the Berliners in general, and of ourselves in particular, to him a thousand times. Of course we now felt like old acquaintances, and Wilhelm had his sketch-book brought up, which he looked through with the greatest interest, and gladly consented to sit, so Wilhelm took a very good likeness of him. We talked much of Gans, and he inquired after Bartholdy, as an excellent man whom he had known in Italy twenty years ago, and of whom he had not heard since his return. In short we found so many interests in common that the evening, one of the pleasantest on our whole tour, passed away only too rapidly, and we took leave of this remarkable man as of an old friend. His way of speaking about his misfortunes was indescribably touching. He actually passed fifteen whole years in the Spielberg without hearing a word of what was going on in the world or in his own family, except when the death of his wife was announced to him in the curtest and driest terms, after he had been there ten years. The poor lady petitioned repeatedly, but in vain, to be allowed to join him, and at last begged for permission to settle at Brünn, so as to be near him. As this

[1] He was the companion in misfortune of Silvio Pellico, and well known through the latter's book *Le mie prigioni.*

could not well be refused they replied that she was free to do as she liked, but that in that case her husband's captivity would be made more rigorous. After this nothing was left for her but to remain and die at Milan. He says that it was only when he heard of her death that he felt the hardship of his imprisonment. No books during the whole time! What cruelty! what moral torture! On his release he went to America as an exile, then to France and Belgium. Three months ago he applied for permission to come to Milan for a short time, to visit his father, who was then still living at the age of eighty-two. It was only then that the emperor learnt that he had not been included in the general amnesty, and he was very angry about it, and ordered him to be released from all obligations at once. He speaks of his own government with the greatest moderation and delicacy, but does not hesitate to say what he thinks about foreign politics. He must be magnanimous to a degree to be able to speak of his misfortunes and of his tormentors with so much gentleness and kindness, after all the bitter sufferings they made him undergo. Not less to be admired is his acquaintance with all that has happened in the world of art, literature, and politics, for he was, as he says himself, buried alive for fifteen years, and has passed most of the time since in America. He seemed to me far the most remarkable man I have seen in Italy; and to think that such is the treatment Austria bestows on men of his stamp!

Diary

Beyond Airolo the road begins to ascend rapidly in terraces, as on the Stelvio. Our driver lost much time by continually changing the horses, and we walked a good deal. The majestic rocks form a sort of amphitheatre, down which the Ticino flows with constant waterfalls. When at last we reached the summit Wilhelm and I had walked on in front, 'where lie the eternal lakes,' the sun had already set, and the twilight was deepening. On the summit is a broad plateau, surrounded by high mountains, and after reaching it you drive for some time smoothly along. We were still two leagues from Ursern, and the darkness made me feel rather timid, but 'worse remained behind.'

When we had descended a little way, the drag broke, and in the increasing darkness the driver had to lead the horses down the steep hill at the slowest possible pace. At last we came to a solitary house, at which he stopped and called till the people came out hesitatingly with a lantern. He asked if they could lend us a wooden drag, but they had not got one, so we had to continue our way as before. At last we came to such a steep place that the driver himself requested us to alight, and thus we made our way on foot, in absolute darkness, down the St. Gothard—not a very comfortable proceeding. Fortunately, however, the weather was fine; if we had had the gale and thunder-storm that came the day after, our position would have been really awkward. At last we saw deep down below the lights of the Hospice, the haven of refuge, in which we passed our first night on Swiss territory. But I have promised to proclaim to the whole world that in all Italy we never were so badly cheated as that night in the Hospice of the Ursern Valley, in straightforward, honest Switzerland. If the truth must be told, the landlord there, quite a young fellow, was a bigger scoundrel than any of his Italian colleagues. What a triumph for Wilhelm!

On August 25 we went on through thick mist and rain, which was disappointing, as I could not see the Ursernthal at all, and I had been looking forward to it so much from the deep impression it made on me when I was here before. I did, however, recognise Andermatt, with its little white church, and the general lie of the ground. When we reached the other side of the Urner Loch we could have the carriage open so as to see the wild scenery of the Devil's Bridge. Still, however, we had several heavy showers, and the weather did not regularly clear till we had passed Altorf and reached the Lake at Flüelen. I recognised Wasen, and altogether remembered the general character of the road very well, and the progression from snow, bare rocks, moss, and fir-trees, first stunted and then of noble proportions, to deciduous trees, and then to orchards and nut-groves in the valley. One thing I had completely forgotten was the drive from Amstäg to Altorf, through a fertile, pleasant plain with high mountains on either hand. A road to Brunnen by

land being distinctly marked in our map, we had, of course, to get into a boat at Flüelen and cross the lake at Brunnen, passing Tellen Platte and Grütli, with Blümlisalp to our left, and Bristenstock behind us. A thunder-storm was threatening all the time, but the lake was kind enough to remain quiet. The people assured us at Brunnen, where we arrived by five o'clock, that the storm would pass over, so we drove on through Schwyz, seeing the Haken and Mythen, to the lake of Zug, by the side of which the road passes for some time. Meanwhile the storm approached, the lightning flashed upon the lake, the thunder re-echoed among the rocks, the rain poured down, and large hailstones beat in our faces. In such weather we arrived at Arth, glad to have reached a place of refuge.

But Wilhelm really did a very foolish thing. The thunder-storm passed away in the evening, leaving a cloudy sky, but the people in the house assured us that the sunrise was invariably clear the morning after a thunderstorm, and so an hour after midnight he started up the Righi with a guide carrying a lantern. The next morning at eight he came back, bathed in perspiration, without having seen so much as a trace of a snow-mountain, and having been obliged, as all the paths had been destroyed by the storm, to wade through innumerable mountain-streams and to take short cuts involving his jumping from rock to rock. It was a mad excursion, but, thank God! he came to no harm.[1]

In passing through Baden they were much delighted with the rich, well-cultivated country. At Offenburg our travellers resolved to make a trip to Strasburg.

Diary.

We drove to Kehl, walked from thence across the Rhine-bridge, and then taking a carriage drove down the rather long avenue to Strasburg and the Place de la Cathédrale. The cathedral is the most elegant building possible in its own style,

[1] This ascent of the Righi, about which Hensel was teased without mercy, is referred to in the words under Felix's portrait in this volume: 'I went with my lantern, and my lantern with me, up the Righi at one o'clock in the morning.'

almost overcrowded on the outside with the little pillars which cover even the large windows. From the inside the entire length of the walls is composed of enormous stained-glass windows, and the effect is most beautiful. On the façade as well as on the spire, now finished, immense labour has been bestowed, but I believe that the spire was intended to have been still higher. Inside the choir has been abominably modernised, and the organ was restored six years ago with a want of taste worthy of the seventeenth century. Upon the whole the cathedral of Ratisbon impressed me more. But it is nice to have seen this one too; a traveller who has made the personal acquaintance of many edifices of rank, so to speak, has such a good conscience. Not far off is the house of Erwin von Steinbach, much of which is in good preservation, especially a staircase, which is a gem. It winds in a spiral, and turns from the bottom to the top on its own axis, so that one can look straight up it. It scarcely looks like a work of art, still less like a concoction of stones and mortar, but more like a fantastic production of nature, such as those wonderful spiral shells. The banisters are little pillars, intersected by the railing, which is in the form of interwoven branches. This staircase is, indeed, in its way, as great a masterpiece as the cathedral.

At Leipzig, where they arrived on September 3, they found Felix, whose journey to England had been delayed by an attack of illness, but who was now quite well again. As may be imagined, there was no lack of subjects of conversation. He played to them his cantata for the festival of the invention of printing, which Fanny liked very much, and discussed with her his plans for the future. His intention was to take a year's rest after the termination of his engagement at Leipzig, which held good for the winter, and go perhaps to Italy—a plan which his sister, with her fresh enthusiasm on the subject, of course encouraged. We shall see by-and-by that matters took a very different turn. Cécile was in good health and unaltered loveliness, and sweet and amiable as ever, while the children, Carl and Marie, were growing and thriving. On Friday, September

11, Felix started for England, and the Hensels for Berlin, where they arrived late the same night, and found everybody in good health.

Fanny Hensel concludes the diary of her travels with these words: 'This is Wednesday, and it is six days since our return. Political events look threatening; the king has given a decided refusal to the request of the States for a constitution; the French are openly preparing for war; everything looks dark, dismal, and dreary, even the weather, for it is blowing and raining, and so cold that my fingers are benumbed. I hear too that the king can be expected to do nothing for art. Of the impression made upon me by our return home I will write at some future period, when the present has become the past, and the storm has either passed over our heads or expended its force upon us. I have learnt from experience that there are subjects which it is best not to deal with at the time.'

1841

AT HOME AGAIN.

A BLANK follows in the diary after Fanny's promise of writing at some future time about the impression made by her return to Berlin, evidently an unpleasant one. The first song, however, which she composed after she had come home was to Goethe's lines—

> At home again once more in peace we rest,
> From door to door all looking at its best;
> The artist's eye still cherishes a store
> Of images instinct with life and lore.
> And though through distant lands we love to roam,
> From hence we came, and here we are at home:
> We turn, from all the charms the world presents us,
> To this one corner, which alone contents us

—whence we may draw the conclusion that her first impression was only a passing one, yielding quickly as she experienced the comfort of her own home, and that this was the reason why the page in her diary intended for it remained blank. She gave expression to her feelings of pleasure in the above-mentioned composition, and soon after in a very merry letter to Felix, who in his answer[1] 'wishes her to remain in this buoyant travelling-spirit, while continuing to live in the quiet of home.'

The Hensels were soon settled down again in their home and in the family circle, but they found great changes in the outside world. Frederic William III. had died, Frederic William IV. was on the throne, and a political movement had begun which henceforth plays an important part in Fanny's diary and letters.

[1] Felix's Letters, Lady Wallace's translation, Leipzig: October 24, 1840.

Fanny to Felix.

Berlin: December 5, 1840.

. . . I am heartily glad to hear that you are entering into the idea of the Nibelungen with so much zest. As you have procured Raupach's work on the subject, your sketch is most likely at this moment far more advanced than mine ever was; indeed, I thought rather of the characters and the plot as a whole than of the arrangement of the scenes. The conclusion strikes me as the greatest difficulty, for who would finish an opera with all that horrible carnage? And yet what else is to be done? The sinking of the Nibelungen-hoard takes place in this manner: After Hagen has murdered Siegfried, he casts envious eyes upon Chriemhild's treasures, brought, if I mistake not, from the Nibelungen-land, and, dreading lest by their means she might rouse friends who would avenge her wrongs, he takes them from her and sinks them in the Rhine. Do let me hear from time to time how the plan progresses. And do write and tell me whether you have anything good at your Quartet-soirées which might be of use to me for my Sunday-music, as I intend beginning it next week.

My husband is hard at work as usual, finishing his foreign sketches with great pleasure. We dine when Sebastian comes home from school in the afternoon, and have settled down to a comfortable, pleasant life for the winter. Whether there will be any revival in art here time alone will show. If the report that Cornelius is coming be true, it would prove that there are good intentions at any rate, although Cornelius might not be quite the right man for the post, if, as they say, the only work to be done is the execution of Schinkel's fresco-designs. Schinkel continues in a sad state, his mind being completely gone. Perhaps my husband is the only artist here who would sincerely rejoice at Cornelius's coming. The brothers Grimm will be here in a few days, and negotiations are said to be going on with Rückert. Our newspapers, nevertheless, are as poor as ever; the Pietists are taking the lead, and personal government appears to be carried to a great extent. What do you say about French politics? And how do you like the debates in the

Chamber? Is it not very sad! Sad for us too, for philistinism is becoming rampant, and saying, 'A fine thing indeed is your constitutional government!'

Among the distinguished men whom the king desired to fix in Berlin was Mendelssohn Bartholdy. As early as November 1840 his brother Paul had been applied to to sound him about settling in Berlin, and consult with him as to ways and means. Paul offered at once to go to Leipzig himself, and confided the object of his journey to Fanny, though keeping it a secret from his mother and Rebecca, who were more excitable, in order not to rouse hopes which might prove vain. The propositions of which Paul was the bearer were apparently very promising, and seemed to open out a tempting sphere of action. The plan was, to divide the Academy of Arts into four departments, viz. Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and Music, each department having a director, who should assume in turn the superintendence of the whole Academy. The main feature of the scheme as regards music was the foundation of a large Conservatorium, with Mendelssohn as director, which should after a time give public concerts of sacred and secular music, with the assistance of the artists from the Court Theatre.

The proposal was an alluring one at first sight, and the prospect of the whole family being again united in Berlin naturally made his brothers and sisters anxious that Felix should accept it, as he was himself inclined to do. Nevertheless, he had had from the beginning strong doubts, not as to the possibility, but as to the probability, of the plan being carried out, and, as we shall see, events proved how correct his judgment in the matter was. He knew the king's indecision in affairs of this kind. Those who had already been summoned to Berlin found themselves in the vaguest and most uncertain position; they received large salaries, it is true, but had nothing to do for them, except to walk about with their hands in their pockets. The usual practice was reversed, for, instead of having places to fill when the men could be found, the men were found first, and the places for them afterwards. Mendelssohn, however, insisted on knowing the exact duties of the position to which he was to be appointed, and when the negotiations began it became

evident that he had hit upon the weak point of the project—there was no definite sphere for him to work in, neither was one found subsequently. Experience had enlightened him upon this point, for his troubles at Düsseldorf had been caused by the want of an exact understanding at first, while his happiness at Leipzig was largely owing to the definite nature of his duties there. Thus from the very first offer of a post at Berlin he stipulated for fixed rules and a clear understanding of his position and duties, so that no needless difficulties might arise in future. He claimed the right to have public concerts, at dates fixed before-hand, at which the musicians of the different orchestras and singers should be bound to assist, just as the choir of the Thomasschule and the orchestra of the theatre were obliged to take part in the Gewandhaus-concerts at Leipzig. He wanted, as he says himself, to be allowed 'despotic' power over the musicians, and to have such a position as should command their respect, and make him independent of everybody. Money he did not care about. In his very first letter he absolutely rejected the idea of coming to Berlin like the other 'great men,' without any definite sphere of work, but merely with the title of court-composer. He knew well enough that unless he were endowed with absolute power it would be impossible for him, however well supported by royalty, to give more than a few inefficient concerts, because of the intrigues, machinations, and jealousies of the different musical institutions and their managers. The managing committee of the opera, the directors of the Singakademie, and the rest would never unite for a common object. All this he explained at length, and showed that though very much inclined to accept the post he required assurances of the strongest support, and that he would not undertake to fulfil the duties of the office, which was to be a public one, without it. Money and present goodwill, although worth a great deal, would be of no avail without security for the future, and unless he had that he declined to give up his situation at Leipzig. The latter had indeed become all that could be desired, and at that very moment a handsome legacy, bequeathed by a citizen of Leipzig, was about to be conveyed to the Conservatorium. Altogether Mendelssohn's personal influence

had done much for music in the town, and his popularity there was something extraordinary. His mother was not far wrong in writing, when a monument was being erected to Bach, from the proceeds of a concert, consisting solely of Bach's organ-music, which Felix got up: 'If he were to announce that he would stand in the market-place in his night-cap, I believe the people of Leipzig would pay for admission.'

The negotiations with Berlin meandered on in an aimless manner; indeed the next letter from Herr von Massow, whom the king had entrusted with the transaction, instead of being more definite, was even vaguer. Mendelssohn's questions were not touched upon at all, the title and salary alone being mentioned, and it became more and more obvious that at present, and perhaps permanently, the post would have no substantiality whatever. But by this time he was being attacked from another side; his family of course only thought of the delight of having the son and brother settled finally in Berlin, and urged him to accept the flattering proposals of the king. Never, perhaps, in his whole career did Mendelssohn's stern conscientiousness show more strikingly than now. The temptation was no small one. Why should not he, drawn towards Berlin as he was by the ties of family affection, follow the example of so many other men of mark, and accept so honourable a post? What did it matter to him if little was demanded of him in return for a high salary? If work could not be found for him, what concern was it of his? But it went against his conscience, and nothing could induce him to disobey that. He saw too that it might not answer in the long-run, even as far as his family was concerned, and told his brother Paul so very plainly in his letter of January 2, 1841.

The correspondence went on, and the statutes Felix had asked for were sent. He wrote about them to Paul in a horrified tone.[1] Will it be believed that after extensive plans had been made, and after Mendelssohn, as we shall see, had been at work upon them with the greatest zeal for more than a year, the whole thing fell absolutely to the ground, and for another whole generation the constitution of the Academy remained in

[1] Felix's Letters, February 13, 1841.

the same rotten condition? During the next twenty-five years the affair did not progress a single step, and no improvement of any kind was introduced. And yet it was not the opposition, but the leaders and conductors of the institution themselves, including the minister, who, in a spirit of carping criticism, were urging the necessity for reform.

As if to point the difference between Leipzig and Berlin in musical matters, and make it more difficult for Felix to leave his present post, everything combined at the moment to open fresh prospects for music in Leipzig. The King of Saxony had been present at one of the concerts, and his openly expressed delight at the performance gave a new impulse to the Gewandhaus, and paved the way for a great deal hitherto thought impossible. Even the legacy which Felix had used all his endeavours to procure for musical endowments was to be granted soon; in a word, at Leipzig everything was going according to his wishes, while at Berlin everything was in the clouds.

However, in May 1841, perceiving that it was useless to attempt anything further by letter, he betook himself, with all his family, to Berlin; but he gained nothing, for the personal negotiations, like the correspondence, became more confused and incomprehensible every day. Fresh complications, serious or trifling, continually cropped up; the king was ever suggesting new projects, which only served to make the affair more intricate, and finally the negotiations were very near being broken off entirely. However, a compromise was effected; Mendelssohn was to place himself at the king's disposal for a year, during which time the great question of the reorganisation of the Academy should be considered at leisure and—buried. That this would be the ultimate result Felix foresaw clearly. Both he and the king were to be at liberty to dissolve the contract at the end of the year. Such was the result of these tedious negotiations! All Mendelssohn's letters show clearly that it was mainly his regard for his mother, who would have felt the disappointment severely, which induced him to accept this strange engagement, the temporary nature of which he fully realised. A summary of the negotiations is given in Herr von Massow's

report to the king,[1] from which it plainly appears that the difficulties did not arise with Felix, but with the other side. He returned to Leipzig with his family on May 21, to make preparations for the change. His proposals for the reform of the Academy were put together in a *Promemoria*, which he presented to Minister Eichhorn, a document which remained, it is needless to say, 'valuable material.'

Felix's return to Berlin was delayed—for again there was a change, and the arrangements made in person appeared to be forgotten. Both sides felt it to be necessary for him to have the official title of *Kapellmeister*, in order to secure his position with the 'king's musicians,' that is, the king's band and the singers of the court opera. This was no hankering after a title on his part, for he was already Kapellmeister to the King of Saxony, but he knew the weakness of the good people of Berlin, and felt that the success of his plans depended upon some such official rank; indeed, this 'promotion' was urged by Massow for the same reason. In July, however, he received a letter from Minister Eichhorn, ignoring all that had been said on this topic, and offering him the alternative, either of going to Berlin without an official appointment or the title of Kapellmeister, but with a salary of 3000 thalers, or of breaking off the negotiations altogether. In this state of things the correspondence had to be recommenced in order to restore even the *status quo* of May. These intrigues and machinations of course annoyed him very much, and put him completely out of tune, before the commencement of his career at Berlin, as is evident from his letters of that period to those intimate friends to whom he could express his disgust without reserve.[2]

This frame of mind, however, did not affect his power of work. He was 'scribbling notes,' as he tells Franz Hauser, and these 'notes' were the music for 'Antigone.' This was one of the king's many thousand schemes which Felix took up warmly. He read the play, and was exceedingly pleased with the idea, but, like so many other projects, it would have been postponed,

[1] Felix's Letters, Berlin, May 1841.

[2] Felix's Letters—to Klingemann, July 15; to David, August 9; and to Hauser, October 12, 1841.

and eventually forgotten, if he had not struck the iron while it was hot, and, with Tieck's assistance, resisted the tendency to procrastination.[1]

In this work Felix found the advantage of his classical education under Heyse, especially of his knowledge of Greek, which he had never neglected. He went through the play with Tieck and Böckh, and adopted Donner's translation, which needed, of course, considerable alteration, as many parts, especially in the choruses, were not suitable for singing. He deliberately disavowed all intention of writing in the antique style; his music did not profess to be such as the ancient Greeks might possibly have used, but was rather intended to form a sort of connecting link between the antique drama and the modern audience. Fanny Hensel[2] justly observes, 'that the music contributed to bring the whole more within our comprehension is beyond question; if Felix had tried to make his music antique also, the spectacle and the spectators would never have met.'

'"Antigone" was performed for the first time in the end of October, in the king's private theatre at Potsdam, before a select audience. All the scenic arrangements were in exact imitation of those of the ancient Greek stage. The weather was delightful, and we went over by rail, finding a dinner prepared for us on the balcony of the station. Whilst we were eating it, a later train arrived with the intellectual and cultivated *monde* of Berlin, who were to be present at the first performance. The small house and the stage looked quite beautiful. I cannot say how much nobler this arrangement appears to me than our stupid shifting scenes and absurd footlights. Who ever saw light coming from below? Then the curtain sinking instead of rising, so that the heads of the actors are seen *first*, is much more sensible than our fashion of making acquaintance with them feet foremost, so to speak. Madame Crelinger, with her wonderful elocution, was a splendid Antigone, realising to the full the noble and dignified character of this grand ideal woman. It was perhaps the most interesting stage performance that has been seen for a long time, and the power,

[1] Felix's Letters, October 21, 1841. [2] Diary.

earnestness, and deep significance of all we saw and heard could not fail to impress even those who were not able to understand it. It made a great sensation, and the 'Antigone' was produced at all the larger theatres, giving rise to innumerable controversies among the antiquarians, who fought them out in the periodicals with true German profundity, and, shall I add, "tiresomeness."'

The 'Antigone' was performed in public for the first time in Berlin at the Schauspielhaus, in April 1842. True to his principle of 'keeping silence in public,' Mendelssohn abstained from writing a word about it; he had had his say in the music, and left the rest to those whose duty or inclination led them to join the strife.[1]

Mendelssohn's presence in Berlin during the summer of 1841 and the following winter naturally brought about other musical events, such as concerts, of which several were given under his direction. The Sunday-music also flourished, and attracted a brilliant audience, often as interesting as the music. On one Sunday the 'lion' was Cornelius, lately arrived; on another, Bunsen and Felix; on a third, Thorwaldsen; and round such centres as these mustered an assembly of all the beauty and intellect, rank and fashion, of Berlin. The seventeenth volume of Hensel's collection of portraits is sufficient evidence of the distinguished society which met at their house in that year, containing, as it does, likenesses of Thorwaldsen, Pasta, Ernst the violinist, Mme. Unger-Sabatier and her husband; Liszt, who on this his first appearance in Berlin created a frantic enthusiasm; Lepsius, the great Egyptologist; Böckh, the philologist, who was then living in the house with them; and Mrs. Austin, the well-known English authoress. A cleverly drawn head of Prince Radziwill (son of the composer of 'Faust') concludes the volume, which is one of the most interesting in the whole collection.

Mendelssohn left Berlin in the spring (the negotiations being postponed till the autumn), and after a short stay on the Rhine went—this time with his wife—to England, where he

[1] Letters to Dehn, October 28, 1841, and Stern, May 27, 1844.

was more courted and caressed than ever. The published letter of June 21, 1842, gives an account of his stay.

After his return to Frankfort he wrote on July 19, 1842 :—

My dear little Mother,[1]—Here we are, well and happy, after a prosperous and happy journey. Our dear children are in excellent health, and your charming letter tells me the same of you. The blue sky and delicious atmosphere give us one lovely day after another. If the human heart could but be sufficiently thankful for so many mercies! I enjoy of all things being at Frankfort, among so many nice friends and relations, and surrounded by such beautiful scenery. I am out every morning by six o'clock for a walk to the 'Darmstädter Warte,' and by the time I come home the children are up and sitting at their breakfast. Looking forward to Switzerland with Paul and Albertine is also a pleasure. May God fulfil all these cheerful prospects, and accept our happiness as thanks for all His benefits past and future. Cécile made up her mind this morning to come with us, leaving the children with her mother, who takes the greatest delight in looking after them, but I know she will retract again a dozen times before we start; nevertheless, I hope in the end to prevail upon her to go, and the Pauls will do their best to urge her, I know.

Last night, just as I was starting on an excursion to the Mühlberg with Veit and Bernus, in came Hiller and his wife; on the steamer we found Mme. Mathieu and Herr and Mme. Rubens,[2] and at Mayence we had a chat with the Woringens. They accompanied us to the station; but Prince Frederick, who has just returned from Rome, delayed us so long on the road that we nearly missed our train. At the station we met Schlemmer and his wife just arriving from Ems, Julia Schunk Jeanrenaud, much improved in health, from Dresden, Rosenhain from Paris, and the Beneckes—the father coming from London, and the son from his country-house. Such a gathering! So pass our days away.

[1] An excellent translation by Mr. G. Grove of part of this letter is contained in Sir Theodore Martin's *Life of the Prince Consort.*

[2] Berlin acquaintances.

I owe you further particulars of our time in London, after our trip to Manchester. I could not make up my mind to go to Dublin, as it would have involved a twelve hours' passage, the thought of which made me put an end to the negotiations. In Manchester we had two quiet days with Cécile's uncles and aunts. On our return to London we were plunged once more in the whirl. I will tell you when we meet of Sir Edward Bulwer's shocking flirtation with Cécile, and how old Rogers (Samuel Rogers, the poet) shook hands with her, and begged her to bring up her children to be as charming and to speak as good English as herself (this created quite a sensation), and also about Mr. Roebuck (ask Dirichlet who he is). *A propos*, at Aix-la-Chapelle we visited the Meyers in proper form; but at Cologne we had barely twenty minutes, and could not attempt to see Louise Hensel. I must also tell you of our charades at the Beneckes, where Klingemann acted a West Indian planter and Sir Walter Scott; of the fish dinner given me at Greenwich by the directors of the Philharmonic Society, at which we ate whitebait, and made speeches; of my choruses from 'Antigone,' as sung at the Moscheles' house (I can give you an imitation of it on the piano, at which I think I hear Rebecca laughing already; but why does not she write?); also of my just catching Herr von Massow at the Brunswick Hotel, and meeting Abeken at Bunsen's, and of our dull dinner-party at the Bunsens'. All these details must be reserved for our meeting. But I must give you a minute account at once of my last visit at Buckingham Palace, for I know that you will be as much interested in hearing as I am in writing about it. Buckingham Palace is, as Grahl says, the one really pleasant, comfortable English house in which one feels *à son aise*. Of course I do know a few others, but yet on the whole I agree with him. Joking apart, Prince Albert had asked me to go to him on Saturday at two o'clock, so that I might try his organ before I left England. I found him alone; and as we were talking away the Queen came in, also alone, in a simple morning dress. She said she was obliged to leave for Claremont in an hour, and then, suddenly interrupting herself, exclaimed, 'But, goodness! what a confusion!' for the wind had littered the whole room, and

even the pedals of the organ (which, by the way, made a very pretty feature in the room), with leaves of music from a large portfolio that lay open. As she spoke, she knelt down and began picking up the music; Prince Albert helped, and I too was not idle. Then Prince Albert proceeded to explain the stops to me, and she said that she would meanwhile put things straight.

I begged that the Prince would first play me something, so that, as I said, I might boast about it in Germany; and he played a chorale, by heart, with the pedals, so charmingly and clearly and correctly that it would have done credit to any professional; and the Queen, having finished her work, came and sat by him and listened, and looked pleased. Then it was my turn, and I began my chorus from 'St. Paul,' 'How lovely are the Messengers!' Before I had got to the end of the first verse, they had both joined in the chorus, and all the time Prince Albert managed the stops for me so cleverly—first a flute, at the *forte* the great organ, at the D major part the whole register, then he made a lovely *diminuendo* with the stops, and so on to the end of the piece, and all by heart—that I was really quite enchanted. Then the young Prince of Gotha came in, and there was more chatting; and the Queen asked if I had written any new songs, and said she was very fond of singing my published ones. 'You should sing one to him,' said Prince Albert; and after a little begging she said she would try the 'Frühlingslied' in B flat, 'if it is still here,' she added, 'for all my music is packed up for Claremont.' Prince Albert went to look for it, but came back saying it was already packed. 'But one might perhaps unpack it,' said I. 'We must send for Lady ——,' she said. (I did not catch the name). So the bell was rung, and the servants were sent after it, but without success; and at last the Queen went herself, and whilst she was gone Prince Albert said to me, 'She begs you will accept this present as a remembrance,' and gave me a case with a beautiful ring, on which is engraved 'V. R., 1842.'

Then the Queen came back and said, 'Lady —— is gone and has taken all my things with her. It really is most annoying.' (You can't think how that amused me.) I then begged

that I might not be made to suffer for the accident, and hoped she would sing another song. After some consultation with her husband he said, 'She will sing you something of Gluck's.' Meantime the Princess of Gotha had come in, and we five proceeded through various corridors and rooms to the Queen's sitting-room, where there stood by the piano a mighty rocking-horse and two great bird-cages. The walls were decorated with pictures; beautifully bound books lay on the tables, and music on the piano. The Duchess of Kent came in too, and while they were all talking I rummaged about amongst the music, and soon discovered my first set of songs. So, of course, I begged her rather to sing one of those than the Gluck, to which she very kindly consented; and which did she choose?—'Schöner und schöner schmückt sich'—sang it quite charmingly, in strict time and tune, and with very good execution. Only in the line 'Der Prosa Last und Müh,' where it goes down to D and then comes up again by semitones, she sang D sharp each time; and as I gave her the note the two first times, the last time she sang D where it ought to have been D sharp. But with the exception of this little mistake it was really charming, and the last long G I have never heard better or purer or more natural from any amateur. Then I was obliged to confess that Fanny had written the song (which I found very hard, but pride must have a fall), and to beg her to sing one of my own also. If I would give her plenty of help she would gladly try, she said, and then she sang the Pilgerspruch 'Lass dich nur' really quite faultlessly, and with charming feeling and expression. I thought to myself, One must not pay too many compliments on such an occasion, so I merely thanked her a great many times; upon which she said, 'Oh, if only I had not been so frightened; generally I have such a long breath.' Then I praised her heartily, and with the best conscience in the world; for just that part with the long C at the close she had done so well, taking it and the three notes next to it all in the same breath, as one seldom hears it done, and therefore it amused me doubly that she herself should have begun about it.

After this Prince Albert sang the Aerndte-Lied, 'Es ist ein Schnitter,' and then he said I must play him something before

I went, and gave me as themes the chorale which he had played on the organ and the song he had just sung. If everything had gone as usual, I ought to have improvised dreadfully badly; for it is almost always so with me when I want it to go well, and then I should have gone away vexed with the whole morning. But, just as if I were to keep nothing but the pleasantest, most charming recollection of it, I never improvised better. I was in the best mood for it, and played a long time, and enjoyed it myself so much that, besides the two themes, I brought in the songs that the Queen had sung, quite naturally; and it all went off so easily that I would gladly not have stopped, and they followed me with so much intelligence and attention that I felt more at my ease than I ever did in improvising to an audience. The Queen said several times that she hoped I would soon come to England again and pay them a visit, and then I took leave; and down below I saw the beautiful carriages waiting, with their scarlet outriders, and in a quarter of an hour the flag was lowered and the 'Court Circular' announced 'Her Majesty left the Palace at thirty minutes past three.' I walked back through the rain to Klingemann's, and enjoyed more than all giving a piping-hot account of it all to him and Cécile. It was a delightful morning! I must add that I asked permission to dedicate to the Queen my A minor symphony, as having been the ostensible object of my visit to England, and because the English name would suit the Scottish piece so charmingly. Also, that when the Queen was going to sing, she said, 'But the parrot must be removed first, or he will scream louder than I can sing; upon which Prince Albert rang the bell and the Prince of Gotha said, '*I* will carry him out,' upon which I replied, 'Allow *me* to do that' (like Cousin Wolf with his 'Allow *me*, *me*, *me!*), and lifted up the big cage and carried it out to the astonished servants, etc. Much remains to be told when we meet, but if this long description makes Dirichlet set me down as a tuft-hunter tell him that I vow and declare that I am a greater radical than ever, and appeal for confirmation to Grote, Roebuck, and yourself, my darling mother, who, I know, enjoy all these details as much as I enjoy them myself.

As I am in the humour for descriptions, I must tell you

about a scene on the voyage which made a great impression on me. We had had a beautiful passage during the night, and, hearing the sailors say that we were only half an hour from Ostend, I went on deck and found the sea still gray in the twilight, and the morning star looking lovely in the dawn We were steering straight for the lighthouse, with its bright white beam, and below were some red and yellow lights, which marked the harbour-bar. England lay behind, and the Continent, with all its delights, before us.

In September the scattered members of the family were reunited in Berlin, and directly Felix arrived, the interminable negotiations about his new post recommenced. He was, however, tired of delays, and determined to bring the matter to a conclusion one way or the other. This was the more necessary as he was full of plans for composition; the 'Elijah,' a subject which had already occupied and interested him, was beginning to take shape in his mind, and he wanted to know whether his time for the next few years was to belong to himself or to others. He therefore begged to be told either *what* he was to do, or definitively that he was to do *nothing*, as no sphere of work was ready for him; in which case he could set to work without fear of interruption. The answer, like official utterances in general, was neither *yes* nor *no*, but a repetition of the old request that he would wait, he would soon find sufficient work, and in the meantime he might enjoy his salary of 3,000 thalers. But this was exactly what he had begun to feel intolerable, so he sat down with a heavy heart to ask for an audience at which to offer his resignation.

The decisive step seemed to have been taken at last. Massow came himself to tell him the day fixed upon by the king for the audience, and said how sorry he was that the matter had come to an end, but that the king was much vexed, and would take leave in very few words. Everything, therefore, seemed to point to an uncomfortable departure, and Felix had the task of preparing his mother for this sad end to all her hopes. He put it off to the last moment, the evening before the audience, and then, taking her for a walk in the

garden, he told her that the idea of settling in Berlin had been a delightful dream, and that within a week he should be back at Leipzig. She was much upset, for though generally appearing placid, she was really of a passionate nature, and when her self-control did give way the outbreak was violent. This was no trifling matter to her: Felix was her pride, her idol—after the long years of separation, she had now grown accustomed to having him with her, and had hoped to keep him for the few more years which were all she could, from her age, look forward to, though *how* near her end was she had, of course, no idea. It was a very painful scene. Fanny drew near, and Felix called to her as she approached that all was over, he had sent in his resignation. He too was affected, even to tears, by his mother's distress, though his strong sense of duty made him feel it impossible to spare her. The evening passed in much sadness. Hensel had a long talk with Felix, and learning then for the first time that his resignation had not as yet been formally accepted, his knowledge of the people and the circumstances led him and Fanny, with whom he talked over the matter, to form a hope that the audience with the king might prove decisive in an opposite direction. After they had all separated, late in the evening, Hensel went back to whisper a few words of encouragement to the mother. In a state of suspense, balancing hopes and fears, they awaited the result.

The next morning Mendelssohn went to Massow's house, in order to go with him to the king, but before setting out Massow, who was sincerely fond of him, absolutely took formal leave of him. The king must have been in an unusually good humour, for instead of finding him 'cross,' as Massow had predicted, he was more amiable and more confidental than Mendelssohn had ever found him before. He replied to Mendelssohn's request for his *congé*, that he could not of course force him to remain, but that he must tell him how sorry he was; all the plans which he, the king, had been intending to carry out with his aid would now fall to the ground, and the loss would be to him irreparable. To Mendelssohn's question, Why irreparable? the king replied that there was no one of whom he thought so highly as Mendelssohn, nor would any one else, he knew,

realise his plans as Mendelssohn would have done. He believed that Mendelssohn himself could not name any one who could replace him. He then returned to these plans, which in his fertile brain had by this time taken another shape, and fortunately a more practicable one. The scheme was, to found a regular court chapel, that is to say, a small choir of about thirty first-rate singers (the subsequent cathedral choir), and a small orchestra (to be formed from the pick of the opera orchestra), which should be bound to execute church-music on Sundays and festival days, and oratorios and other music of that kind on various occasions: Mendelssohn was to be the conductor, compose music for it, etc. Mendelssohn, whose first thought probably was for his family, immediately caught up this idea, which seemed to offer some ground for an arrangement, and replied that if this scheme had only been mentioned to him before he should have looked upon the point as settled, because the want of a practical sphere of action was exactly what had made him throw the thing up. Now there seemed every prospect of an understanding being arrived at. The king answered that he was well aware that a musician required an instrument to make music on, and to furnish him with such an instrument of singers and players should be *his*, the king's, care; but then if he found him this instrument, he must be *sure* of him whenever he *needed* him, and that would only be possible if he remained in his service. Till this instrument was complete he might do what he liked, return to Leipzig, travel in Italy ('It appears you are fond of travelling,' the king repeated several times)—in short, he should be perfectly free, so long as he was ready to come when the king called him. He did not ask for an immediate answer; Mendelssohn was to think it over and give his answer to Massow. Thus the audience ended very much in the way Hensel had anticipated. Massow, who was present at the conversation (which lasted upwards of an hour) positively beamed with delight, and repeated over and over again in ecstasy, 'You will never dream of leaving us *now*!' Felix's chief thought was of the pleasure he was about to give his mother. He came home fatigued and exhausted, but charmed with the fascinating manners of the king, who delighted everybody who came into personal contact

with him. The family were enchanted at the result of the audience, and his mother especially was as vehement in expressing her joy at the prospect of keeping her Felix as she had been before in giving way to her sorrow at the idea of losing him. Mendelssohn took the precaution of writing a letter to the king containing a summary of the conversation, and expressing his intention of returning to Leipzig until the instrument should be ready for him to play upon; he declined to receive more than half his salary so long as he was merely at the king's disposal without any definite duties at Berlin, except composing such works as the king should be pleased to command. It must be owned that when he came to think the matter over in cold blood, he felt by no means sure that this plan would not evaporate as all the former ones had done; however, it offered at any rate something practical, and prevented his cutting himself wholly adrift from Berlin, while the resignation of half the salary released his sensitive conscience from the intolerable burden of receiving money for which he was giving no equivalent in work. One thousand five hundred thalers, which he still retained, was a fair recompense for the important works he composed for the king at Leipzig, 'Athalia,' the 'Midsummer-night's Dream,' and 'Œdipus,' and for his relinquishment of other offers of permanent employment, such for instance as those made him at this time by the King of Saxony.

Felix and his family left Berlin in October, the former intending to return on November 14 for Fanny's birthday, but the following letter arrived in his place.

Leipzig: November 16, 1842.

Dear Fanny,—Unfortunately I was not able to spend the 14th with you, nor even to send this letter in time, for quite unexpectedly I had to go to Dresden, and I would not write without inclosing the Cherubini you wished for. Accept him kindly, late as he comes, and think of me at all the fine passages, that is to say, pretty nearly from beginning to end. I tried to get the full score instead of this miserable arrangement, but it is not to be had in Germany. Anyhow I wish you every happiness, dearest Fanny, to-day as well as four days ago, to-morrow

as well as to-day, and I thank God every day of my life for giving me such a sister as you.

My object in going to Dresden was to make sure of that long-promised legacy (and I hope I succeeded), and also to thank the king for his kind offers, of which I told you, and to explain why I cannot accept them. That business is over now: he received me in the pleasantest manner, and I have the satisfaction of knowing that that bothering question of whether my engagement was to be here or at Berlin has been decided at last without anybody feeling hurt. During the couple of days I spent there I was as frolicsome as a rabbit with the Hübners, Bendemanns, Francks, etc., and a few hours after my return I went back to the station, and waited two hours for Cécile, who came at last, looking as well and lively as possible, and in a most talkative mood. Heaven be praised for her health and our happiness. The children are thriving. The day after to-morrow we intend returning to our old quarters, but Cécile of course will not go till everything is ready and in good order.

Tell Paul that the other evening I was in the Tunnel again with W., who was longing for him. So did I. We had peas, dressed in tallow, and cauliflowers in soap-lather; also a pie-crust with nothing in it, just like the speeches and toasts.

And now, good-bye. May you keep well and be as happy this and all the years of your life, as you make all of us, especially me, who can never thank you enough for all you are and have been! May we meet soon!

They did not meet soon, and when they did it was in sorrow, for Felix, when he went, did not find his mother alive.

THE YEARS 1842 *AND* 1843.

Felix found a great deal of work waiting for him at Leipzig, and his letters show how much more at his ease he felt there than at Berlin. Besides his specific duties—directing the weekly Gewandhaus-concerts and various extra ones—he was very busy organising the Conservatorium to which the King of Saxony had devoted the legacy so often mentioned. Then there were the compositions for Berlin, 'Athalie,' the 'Midsummer-night's Dream,' and 'Œdipus.' At the same time he entirely rewrote the 'Walpurgisnacht,' composed the Violoncello Sonata in D major, and several songs with and without words. The correcting of 'Antigone,' and the A minor symphony, which he was preparing for the press, occupied the rest of his time. Then strangers or Leipzig people would come wanting to see him, to consult him, to ask him for help, or to be examined by him, added to which he received no end of letters, which he invariably answered most minutely himself. Meanwhile matters in Berlin really appeared to progress. On December 4 he received a letter from the king containing his nomination as *General-musikdirektor*, and placing the church and sacred music under his superintendence and control. There was also inclosed an order in council, drawn up in accordance with the opinions and wishes expressed by Mendelssohn at his interview with the king, and regulating all the details in clear and precise terms. This was obviously traceable to Massow's influence, and showed an earnest desire to carry out the scheme, from which it was evident that no important obstacles existed, and that if everybody was sincere in their good intentions the whole affair might be easily arranged. At the same time Massow wrote begging Mendelssohn to come to Berlin for a few days and settle everything in person. Mendelssohn fixed December 17 for the

journey, and proposed spending a week at Berlin; but a great misfortune suddenly befell the family, and called him there at an earlier date.

Leah had latterly been uncommonly well and in good spirits. She entered with greater eagerness than usual into all the preparations for Christmas, and no one who saw her pursuing the even tenour of her life from day to day, always calm, always happy, could dream of any approaching danger. There was indeed not the slightest sign of the end. On Sunday, December 11, Varnhagen's nieces, the Fräulein Assing, had been invited to dinner, as well as the family, who always gathered round her on Sundays, and the Woringens, who were considered almost members of the family. The party was a merry one, and she entered into all the fun and laughter, extracting a promise from the Woringens, in the course of conversation, to spend the next ten Christmases with her.

In the evening an exceptionally numerous party gathered in the drawing-room, but in the midst of a lively conversation she was taken ill, and had to be carried to bed.

After a time she fell asleep in her habitual position, seeming quite comfortable, even her hands being warm, and her children could not conceive that they were standing by their mother's death-bed. This lasted till half past nine on Monday morning, December 12, when there was a short struggle, and all was over.

Thus another full and happy life was cut short by a sudden, almost painless, death, without any preceding illness. Fanny writes in her diary: 'A more happy end could not have been desired for her. She was taken literally as she told Albertine last summer she should like to be, knowing nothing about it and without being laid up, but engaged to the last in the ordinary course of her pleasant daily life, and in the full enjoyment of her intellectual faculties.'

The *Vossische Zeitung* of the next day contained the following obituary notice, probably from the pen of Varnhagen:—

Leah Salomon. A Portrait.

Berlin: December 12, 1842.

Berlin has lost to-day one of its most eminent inhabitants. Leah Salomon, the widow of Town-councillor Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and mother of the King's Kapellmeister, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, died this morning from an attack of spasm of the lungs, with which she was seized on the previous evening. Endowed with rare qualities of head and of heart, she was high-minded and affectionate to a degree, and fulfilled all the duties of a loving wife and devoted mother. Her benevolence, exercised in secret, and invariably guided by sound common-sense, made itself felt far and wide. The sweetness of her character did not exclude firmness, and in times of difficulty and danger, when her husband showed himself a patriot full of faith and patience, her courage equalled his. Her death will be deplored not only by her gifted children and near relations, but by a large circle of friends and acquaintances, for she had gathered round her a society as select as it was brilliant, and as sociable as it was animated. It was while engaged in conversation, friendly and intellectual as hers always was, that she was suddenly called away. Her memory will be cherished by all who knew her, and handed down to future ages!

There were, of course, no Christmas festivities this year, and all felt it a kind of comfort when the time was over. On the Monday after Dirichlet went to Leipzig for a few days with his eldest son, and shortly after this visit Felix wrote to Rebecca:—

Leipzig: January 5, 1843.

Dearest Sister,—I must send you a few lines of thanks for the great pleasure we have had in Dirichlet and Walter's society, for as you deprived yourself of their company for that time, we feel that it is to you we owe their visit. I could tell you in person better than by letter how much good they have done me; but I can assure you that bitter tears rose to my eyes when I lost sight of the train that was carrying them away. That Dirichlet and I hit it off uncommonly well you have long known, and

yet I was almost astonished to see how naturally he fell into our life here, although I should at any time, and more now of course than ever, have found it difficult to arrange anything exactly to suit him. He was wholly restricted to our society, for we often do not see even our most intimate friends now, as we feel our sorrow least when we are alone. He seemed, however, to feel the same, and if he retains only half the pleasant recollections of his visit that we and all who met him here do, I hope he will keep his promise and pay us another soon. But *you* must come too, Rebecca; you must see our house here.

I could write you a whole volume about Walter, for I am sure you do not know the boy half so well as I do (how you will laugh at me for saying this!). But seriously, I do not believe that I am mistaken in calling him a pattern child both in what he is and what he is not, and I am convinced he is highly gifted. I know no boy that I love more, or think more highly of, and none whom I should so wish mine to resemble at the same age. His very faults, of which you so often complain, and Dirichlet too sometimes, *I* consider part of his excellences, for that very forwardness in speech and timidity in action which I should blame in a young man seem to me only natural in a boy whose mind has developed faster than his body, and especially in one who has been brought up at home, and in *such* a home. I have only one thing to wish for him, and that is the continuance of his health; for he has all other qualities we could desire for him, and will, I believe, even more than realise all our hopes and expectations. I observed him closely during these few days, and very much admired his disposition, especially his docility. I could go on talking about all that struck me in him for ever, but I will only mention one thing more: I do not say of him as I do of other boys, what a very good man he will make some day, but I feel that he is good already. Dirichlet and the boy himself will have told you about his sketches, for he took great pride in them. And he really did make astonishing progress. I have kept them all and numbered them, and you will be surprised when you look over the series to find how, among all the childish nonsense, there will suddenly appear half-figures, especially of horses, drawn quite charmingly.

Then again, he retained, in his mind's eye, and drew quite correctly, the rehearsal of the subscription-concert, with all the instruments, etc., but he made all his figures sit right and left, as he seems to have no idea that the human countenance can be looked at from any other point of view than either full-face or profile. And what a good idea he had formed of Lützow's 'wilde Jagd,' all the time cherishing an intense longing for a box of tin soldiers. For Carl, too, he drew a christening carriage which surpasses, I am sorry to say, all my own efforts in that direction. He has more talent for music than I had expected. You have calumniated him, for his ear is quite correct, but he has never practised, and that is not so easy to make up for now as it would be if he were only four or five years old. You jump to the conclusion that he does not understand if he sings a different note from what you play, but you forget that the whole mechanism of the ear and the voice becomes rusty if it is not from the first kept in constant practice. If in the course of the next ten years he were never to practise, he could only become a good musician at the cost of unwearied effort, but now all that is required is a little patience on the part of the teacher just at first. To be convinced that the mechanism, having once been set going, does not easily get rusty again, you have only to look in the glass. When Walter left he could sing the low C quite correctly when I touched it on the piano, and then find the higher octave by himself; he could also find D and G, but not the other notes. He would even miss D and G occasionally, particularly when he wanted to go too fast, but then I had only to give him the note again, without saying anything, and he would try the intervals up or down, till he got it correct. Go over this exercise with him too, sometimes, but never be cross about it! Do but firmly impress upon his mind the two C's, and then make him understand the difference in sound between the scale (that is, the consecutive notes) and the triad (that is, notes separated by intervals, but struck together). He quite understood it here, but may have forgotten it again, and perhaps the two C's too, but he will soon find them again if you help him on the piano. And if instead of C he sings A flat, or even G flat,

do not exclaim, in a horrified tone, 'Oh, Walter!' but shake your head, strike the C again, and make him listen to the sound. In this manner you will form a singer—tenor or bass. There's a sermon for you! But I told Dirichlet beforehand that I should write you a long letter about Walter, and here it is! What could be a greater interest or pleasure to us just now than a dear, promising boy, such as he is! A thousand loves to him and Dirichlet, and thank them in our name. Tell Fanny I shall write to her next time.

The mother had been the literal centre of the family circle, and though the four children did not need her to keep up their affection, they felt the loss of this rallying-point in many minor but important incidents of daily life. She was the natural head, round whom the others fell into their own places as a matter of course. The members of the family dined every Sunday with *her*; the Christmas-eve gathering took place, year after year, at *her* house; Felix, when he came to Berlin, was as a rule *her* guest. Now the brothers and sisters were forced to make fresh arrangements, and they all felt the change acutely. Felix speaks of it in a letter to Paul, written shortly after his mother's death [1]:—

Leipzig: December 22, 1842.

My dear Brother,—I wrote to you the day after my arrival here that we were all well, and living on in our sorrow as we best could, dwelling on the happiness we once possessed. My letter was addressed to Fanny, but written to you all, though it seems you had not heard of it; and even this trifle shows what will day by day be more deeply and painfully felt by us, that the point of union is now gone where we could always feel ourselves still to be children, and, though we were no longer so in years, we felt that we were still so in feeling. When I wrote to my mother, I knew that I wrote to you all, and you knew it too; we are children no longer, but we have enjoyed what it really was to be so. Now, this is gone for ever! At such a time, we cling to outward things from hour to hour, like people in a dark room groping to find the way. Tell me if we cannot

[1] Felix's Letters, translated by Lady Wallace.

arrange that I should write to one of you by turns once every week, and get an answer from you, so that we may at least hear of each other every three weeks, independently of more frequent letters; or say whether any better arrangement occurs to you. I thank you also a thousand times for your kind question about the house. I had already thought of asking you for it, and now you offer it to me. But before we finally settle this, I should like you to bring the subject cautiously on the *tapis*, in the presence of our sisters and brothers-in-law. If you perceive that any unpleasant feeling is awakened in their minds by such a proposal, when for the first time, in Berlin, I am not to live under the same roof with them, and if they give any indication of such a feeling, even by a single word or remark (you will quickly observe this, and I rely entirely on you), then we must give it up. In any other event, I shall thankfully accept your kindness. My next visit to Berlin will be a severe trial to me—indeed, all I say or do is a trial to me, anything, in short, that is not mere patient endurance. I have, however, begun to work again, and that is the only thing which occupies me a little. Happily, I have some half-mechanical work to do, transcribing, instrumentation, and similar things. This can be accomplished by a kind of almost animal instinct, which we can follow, and which does us more good than if we had it not. But yesterday I was obliged to direct. That was terrible. They told me that the first time would inevitably be terrible, but sooner or later it must be done. I thought so too, but I would fain have waited for a few weeks. The first thing was a song of Rochlitz's, but when in the rehearsal the alto sang *piano*, 'As the hart pants,' I was so overcome that I was obliged afterwards to go out of the room, to give free vent to my tears.

To-day, Heaven be praised, I am not required to see or to speak to any one, and my cough, too, is better. Thus time glides on; but what we have once possessed is not less precious, and our present loss not less painful with time.

The whole family naturally desired to see as much of Felix as possible during this period of common affliction, and so the

Hensels planned a journey to Leipzig, for which one of the Gewandhaus-concerts afforded an excuse. Felix writes about it:—

Leipzig: February 11, 1843.

I write to inform you (in high dudgeon) that the next subscription-concert will be one of the worst, if not *the* worst, of the whole winter. Excuse my detailing all the circumstances which force us to perform Pape's symphony in A major instead of Beethoven's symphony in D minor, and a cavatina of Donizetti's instead of Bach's Mass in B minor—in short, it is so arranged, and I have not been able to change it. Now you must decide whether you will come for a bad concert immediately (which has its advantages), or for a better one a week later (which is not without drawbacks).

Has the thief been found?[1]

I see from an article in the *Leipziger Allgemeinen Zeitung* that a daring burglary has been committed by night in the house of Professor D——, at Berlin; that the police had given him warning a week beforehand, and for eight days every precaution had been taken, but, nothing having been seen which could cause alarm, the watchmen had been removed on the ninth, and the house was entered that same night. A different version has reached me from another source, so my account varies according to circumstances, especially as to the length and thickness of the crowbar. But, jesting apart, it is a horrible business.

On February 21 the Hensels went to Leipzig, where they spent a very pleasant week. Fanny writes in her diary:—

We had a great deal of music, and heard Gade's first work, a symphony in C minor, which is full of promise. Felix was quite enchanted with it, and directed the rehearsals with a care and attention which might almost have been called affectionate. Berlioz was at Leipzig at the same time with us, and his odd manners gave so much offence that Felix was continually being called upon to smoothe somebody's ruffled feathers. When the

[1] A daring burglary had been committed in the Dirichlets' house shortly before.

parting came, Berlioz offered to exchange batons, 'as the ancient warriors exchanged their armour,' and in return for Felix's pretty light stick of whalebone covered with white leather sent an enormous cudgel of lime-tree with the bark on, and an open letter, beginning, 'Le mien est grossier, le tien est simple.' A friend of Berlioz who brought the two translated this sentence, 'I am coarse and you are simple,' and was in great perplexity how to conceal the apparent rudeness from Felix. We also heard Mme. Schumann play several times most exquisitely.

Berlioz's note, which has been published in Nohl's 'Letters of Musicians,' runs as follows:—

Au chef Mendelssohn!—Grand chef! nous nous sommes promis d'échanger nos Tomaweks! voici le mien, il est grossier, le tien est simple!

Les Squaws seules et les visages pâles aiment les armes ornées. Sois mon frère, et quand le grand esprit nous aura envoyés chasser dans le pays des âmes, que nos guerriers suspendent nos Tomaweks unis à la porte du conseil.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

Leipzig: 2 *Février* 1843.

Gounod came to Berlin towards the end of April, and stayed till May 15. Fanny writes about him: 'He spent most of his time here, and was kindly received by the whole family, but he has seen literally nothing in Berlin, except our house, our garden, and our family, and heard nothing but what I have played him, though we entreated him to go and see what was to be seen. The days indeed passed very pleasantly in his company, and we thought him much improved since we met in Rome; his gifts are pre-eminent, his musical perception being most acute and his judgment correct to a degree, besides which he is endowed with infinite tenderness and delicacy. He possesses the same quick perception in other things besides music. For instance, to hear him read German was a real pleasure to me, so marvellously did he seize upon the essential peculiarities of the language. He read several scenes from the 'Antigone,' and to my astonishment understood them. Another thing

which does not exactly prejudice me against him is his great love and esteem for us, of which his journey to Berlin, solely to see us, was a practical proof. His presence was a great incitement to me, for I played and talked about nothing but music during the many afternoons I spent alone with him, for he generally stayed on with us after dinner. We talked much, too, about his own future, and I think I was not wrong in putting oratorio before him as likely to take the first place in music in France. He entered so fully into my views that he set to work at once upon the libretto: 'Judith' is the subject he has chosen. His perfect confidence in us fully merited the kind reception he met with from ourselves, and, as I gratefully acknowledge, from my brothers and sisters too. He was a general favourite.'

In July 1843 Rebecca and her two boys, Walter and Ernst, started on their long-projected tour in Italy, going first to Freiburg in Breisgau, where Woringen had settled, and then to Badenweiler, where they were to wait, in beautiful scenery, for Dirichlet, who could not follow till after the conclusion of his lectures. At one time, when the journey was first planned, in the spring, the Hensels had thought seriously of joining them, but they had given up the idea. As we shall see, a strange chain of circumstances obliged them to follow later on. The entire correspondence during this tour having been preserved, the letters on both sides will give the best description of the life and events of the time.

LETTERS FROM HOME AND ABROAD

Rebecca to Fanny.

Kehl: July 15, 1843.

. . . I have had a pleasant journey and charming weather, especially from Darmstadt to Heidelberg, along which delightful road we drove in an open carriage on a lovely morning. I saw at least twenty houses there in which I should like to take up my abode as a professor. I suppose I may spare myself a description of this country so well known to you all, and also of those parts of it which you do *not* know. The names of Heidelberg, Weinheim, Handschuhsheim are sufficient to warm one's heart, for their all ending in *heim* (home) makes one long to set up one's home there. At Heidelberg we drove after dinner to the Wolfsbrunnen and the trout-ponds (as you know, the trout always chooses pretty country), then to the old castle, where we got wet. We made our entrance into Heidelberg in a very jovial manner; as we approached we met omnibuses laden with bearded students in blouses, going on excursions, and the town itself was decorated with wreaths and flags. I began to feel confused at so much being done in my honour, until I learnt that these marks of respect were not intended for me alone, but for two princes of Baden as well. On Friday the train took us in an hour and three-quarters to Karlsruhe. I thought I would give myself an extra treat and go on to Baden for the afternoon; but that part was rather a failure. Our rooms looked into a narrow street, and I was very tired, although the distance was so short, but after a few hours on the sofa I went to the new castle to see the sunset. Instead of the sight we expected a thunder-storm came over to us from the old castle, and travelled so much faster than we could that we were wet through

again before we got home. I waited till two o'clock to-day, hoping for fine weather to see Geroldsau and the convent of Lichtenthal, but it was not forthcoming, so we drove on here through the rain. The weather improved on the further side of the hills, and the cathedral lay before us in the glorious light of the setting sun. To-morrow I am going over it with Walter, and I feel as if I were looking forward to some great event. How light and airy it looks with the hills in the distance, and it really seems higher than they do! I found a good hotel here at Kehl, far better than I expected, very quiet and clean, the beds enormous, and trout and stewed peaches for dinner. I thought of you, dear Fanny, as I always do when I am pleased or displeased with anything. Altogether I like this place very much, although the scenery cannot compare with that of aristocratic, pretentious Baden, with its grand hotels, containing 5,000 waiters and as many bells, which ring the whole day long. Here the church-bells are pealing, a knot of peasants in white jackets and fur caps stand discussing politics under our windows, others are coming in from the fields carrying loads on their heads, and every one of them wishes one good evening. This exactly suits my idyllic mind, and the air makes one aware of the vicinity of the mountains. But ten o'clock is striking —a late hour for such a small town. Good-night. More to-morrow.

Freiburg . . . I congratulate you about Felix,[1] and am very glad of it, although I do not profit by his coming. It is like my bad luck that this should happen the very first winter I am away from home. I hope he will like his post, and then we shall live together for a longer time; but if—which Heaven forefend—he does not like it, I do not envy you very much. When we were at Leipzig this time, he was most pleasant. I entirely approve of your disposal of Jean Paul,[2] as of everything you do, and I hope you will also approve of my doings, for I still keep my childish dread of a scolding, although I cannot boast of ever having had one from Dirichlet. But to return to my travels.

[1] It had just been settled that he was to come to Berlin for the winter.

[2] Fanny was going to give his works to the Woringens.

Freiburg is a paradise, and the whole way from Kehl charming. Germany is a beautiful country, whether you are in it or whether you are not. Yesterday morning I drove to Strasburg with Walter and Schuhmacher,[1] and spent three hours in, on, and about the cathedral. Schuhmacher was surprised not to find a crane on the spire. We stayed for mass, heard the organ play, and saw a procession make the round of the church—I need not describe it to you—but it was all most beautiful. We also climbed to the top of Erwin's staircase, about which you told us so much. By two in the afternoon we were in our carriage again, and drove here through the loveliest scenery and under the loveliest sky; but, think of it, all the finest old castles and all the nicest new country-places are occupied by English. Franz came to meet us half a league from the gate; and you can imagine how pleased we were to see him! They insisted upon doing the impossible and taking us in, but I was firm and put Ernst to bed at the Zähringer Hof, and then went back to Angelica, to find the well-known tea-table, the old many-coloured sofa, and the dear old faces. . . . I am glad I have enjoyed South Germany thoroughly before I am perhaps spoiled by Switzerland and Italy. One does not see the church here to advantage after Strasburg Cathedral, it is so small in comparison, rather resembles a boudoir, and seems too comfortable to make one turn Roman Catholic out of penitence. A painter on glass of this place very cleverly restored the defective windows in the cathedral, entirely renewing some, in return for which he was allowed to die of hunger, while his family are still living in utter misery. I should not have thought such a thing possible in our day. I hear enough of politics here, for it is a most excitable little town, but no music at all. Have you heard Mme. Viardot-Consuelo? That dreadful Georges Sand! Every kitchen-garden I see reminds me of her. Please tell me all and everything! I take an interest in every slice of bread and butter.

[1] Her servant.

Rebecca to Paul.

Badenweiler: July 28, 1843.

I will improve a rainy day, of which, unfortunately, there are a great many, by writing my weekly journal to you, who are most likely by this time a 'grass widower.' You will probably have heard at No. 3 Leipziger Strasse—for you keep up your connection with that establishment, I hope—that I am remaining on here, which I do not regret, as it is really a charming little nook, quite 'the lovely valley' of which Fanny sings, with such green meadows full of splendid trees, and, so many springs, though it is high up among the hills; the air is balmy, laurels and oleanders grow in the gardens, the *obligato* ruined castles and oaks are in their right places, and, should one fancy one gets tired of the view of the green hills, one has only to turn the other way, and there is the Rhine, *rive droite et rive gauche*, with the whole of Alsace and the Vosges. It is exactly the place I like to live in; for there are not only beautiful spots, but every step is beautiful, down to the carefully gravelled walks which sparkle with coloured crystals (I should like to send a cart-load for our garden) and every cow-shed, nay, every stick, is wreathed with the most lovely creepers. This can give you no idea of how beautiful it is, but you will be able to imagine that it *is* beautiful, if only the weather were better. They say it is very bad indeed in Switzerland; at Lauck, in Baden, there is deep snow, and as long as the wind is blowing from Basle there is no hope of its becoming settled.

The *table d'hôte* here reminds me of Heringsdorf, for it is nearly all women and children—even Ernst dines downstairs. Schuhmacher is making great progress in wisdom, sketches, keeps a diary, and pays court to the French chamber-maids. Franz has got me a book adorned with vignettes, and entitled 'Schuhmacheriana,' for me to write down the innumerable anecdotes touching my suite, which have greatly amused him. The best of it is that Schuhmacher is invariably taken for the gentleman of the party, and tries to keep up the character as long as possible. At Heidelberg they asked him whether he 'commanded' two rooms with two beds. Minna is quite

bewildered by all she sees, and piously horrified at the many Roman Catholic images by the wayside. 'Oh, look there, madam, there is our Lord Christ hanging out in the rain again!'

This journey has already given me a foretaste of many of the discomforts which await me in Italy. I do not think I can be worse cheated anywhere than I have been at Leipzig and Heidelberg, nor can fleas be more superabundant; while as for the language, I shall have no more difficulty in making myself understood in Italian than I have here in German. The fine scenery, so like Switzerland, seems to bring with it the delightful Swiss-German. My neighbour at dinner, a lady from Basle, asked me if I could not speak German, the only German they understand well here being French. The dinner-bell brings a welcome interruption to the flow of my pen.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: July 27, 1843.

So you are at Badenweiler. So far, so good. Angelica's [1] eyes are quite as blue as the lake of Geneva, and, though she is not quite as tall as the mountains, what good would it be if she were? Your delightful letter from Freiburg reached me yesterday, just at the right moment, for first the nurse ran after us with it into the garden, just as we were accompanying Jakoby to the gate, and secondly I had already written three pages to my husband,[2] asking him to let me take Schuhmacher, whom you said in your last you meant to send back. I might have known beforehand that you would keep him, and it is all the better for Heinrich, for that compound of pig and donkey is so very good-natured that I cannot make up my mind, stony-hearted as I am, to part with him. I shall keep him for the same reason that made Polycrates throw away his ring. Jakoby has called several times during the last few weeks.[3] How rude he can be! But really those rude people have rather the best of it, that is, if they have, like Jakoby, redeeming qualities,

[1] Frau von Woringen had gone to Badenweiler with them.
[2] Hensel was on a journey to England.
[3] The mathematician, who was also going to Italy.

for if they do but take the trouble to be ordinarily polite, people are amazed, charmed, and grateful into the bargain. I should have liked to have seen him and Schönlein together, to see which of the two would have outdone the other in rudeness. Schönlein's manners have a tinge of aristocracy, for Jakoby has waited on him a dozen times at least, and he has each time let him wait in vain, till at last he has been obliged to go again to the Thiergarten. Heaven preserve me from ever being so ill that I should be obliged to consult Schönlein. I need not go to him about my hands, which you think far worse than they are if you imagine that I cannot write. The numbness has almost disappeared, and the weakness comes and goes by fits. Galvanism did not suit me, and I am now trying bathing them in a decoction of brandy, which prescription has acquainted me with the interesting fact that in Berlin, where every third shop sells Schnapps, there is no distillery, and I shall have to see where I can get the stuff. I played very well here the other day, but the next, at Mme. Decker's, worse than any night-watchman—in a word, I can no more depend upon myself now than I could at fourteen, and it is hard to become incapable before I have reversed those figures.

Felix's coming is still very uncertain, and I try to dismiss the subject entirely from my mind. Meanwhile he is coming on Wednesday for a week, and has composed a chorale for the anniversary of the thousandth year of German independence, which is, I believe, going to be sung in the cathedral here—an appropriate symbol of his own affairs, which seem likely to linger on for a thousand years.

I can well believe that every kitchen-garden reminds you of Consuelo; but it is really a pity that you do not see and hear her prototype on the stage. She is an incomparable person! And many of her traits are so true to nature that when I hear her speak, Consuelo stands before me. It is a pity, though, that our excellent manager Küstner does not see it in the same light, and by his bad treatment really makes it impossible for her to appear a third time, instead of which she gives a concert to-morrow. Neither will he offer her an engagement, although she would like to sing at the German opera, and it would be an

immense boon to us. Old Hofräthin Herz has just given a remarkable proof of strength at her time of life. She fell from the sixteenth or seventeenth stair, right *over* the banisters, part of which she carried with her, down on to the stone pavement below, and when the terrified bystanders wanted to pick her up and carry her upstairs she refused all help. Anybody else would have been killed outright, but all Dieffenbach could find was a few bruises, and in three days she was all right again.

Farewell! May your journey continue as prosperous as, thank Heaven, it has been hitherto, and write me six letters for every one you send the others—poetic justice demands it.

From a Letter of Rebecca's to Fanny.

Badenweiler: August 3.

I wish I could send you some of the wild strawberries with which the hills here are covered, and which, with a very slight exaggeration, are as big as our pine-apple ones. And the trout—oh, the forget-me-nots! oh, the trout! This is the true home of the trout, for in every direction you hear the plash and tinkle of running water, and come upon brooklets no wider than my finger, with great bridges of stone. I have seen Hebel's Wiesenthal from the Blauen, which is the third highest peak in the Schwarzwald. Another one is called Schau-in's-Land (Prospect Hill). And every day I think how angry Hensel would get with the stretches of greensward in which I delight, and which do me so much good. He would not object so much to three lovely girls, whose hair, teeth, complexion, and eyes were a pleasure to behold at dinner to-day.

The same to the same.

Freiburg: August 11.

Yesterday morning I got into the diligence all by myself, and drove here to Freiburg to the Woringens, to surprise Dirichlet. As yet, however, he has not turned up, but an hour after my arrival Jakoby and Borchardt came in, bringing

messages from you and Felix, so they are established for the day at the Woringens'. The children are at Badenweiler, under the care of Minna, Schuhmacher, the landlord, his family, and the whole company of bathers, with whom they are great favourites. The drive here was very pleasant; I was in the best of company, being quite alone, and, to say nothing of the great pleasure of returning to the Woringens', I was highly delighted at seeing the well-known country once more. It was like nearing home when I saw the cathedral rise in the air.

Saturday, 12*th*.—This is a pleasant, or, as they say here, a *luschtiger* morning. Last night I was as cross and out of sorts as possible, from a combination of troubles. Dirichlet had not arrived; I had not told them to send me news of the children, as I thought I was certain to be back to-day; I had come home tired out from a long walk, in which I had got wet through; and, to crown all, I had had to put on a pair of great thick peasant's shoes. While I was lying on the sofa in Angelica's dressing-gown, the idea suddenly flashed into my mind that perhaps Dirichlet had not taken the route by Freiburg after all, and that he might be sitting at that very moment at Badenweiler, abusing me, so that our meeting would have to begin with explanations. If I had been able to stir a limb, I should have gone back to Badenweiler that night. Franz and Angelica did all that kindness, and Jakoby all that sarcasm, could do to calm me down. This morning at five o'clock I heard somebody knock three doors off; I jumped out of bed and rushed out of the room as I was, and there stood Dirichlet. He had gone straight from the diligence to sleep at the Zähringer Hof, and was intending to call on the Woringens. By accident they gave him the room next to Jakoby, who happened to wake up, and, recognising Dirichlet's voice, began to make a row, and Borchardt went in in his nightshirt to Dirichlet, who, of course, ran straight here without either sleep or breakfast. At seven o'clock I sent him to wake up the Woringens, and the *allegria* was great. All sorts of plans have been made and unmade. Jakoby left suddenly, promising to meet us at Genoa, Nice, Florence, or some such beautiful place. Your delightful letter has been read, Dirichlet has gone to see his colleague here, and

in the meantime I am scribbling to you. Jakoby admires you, as he ought, and made quite an enthusiastic speech about your eyes yesterday.

Fanny to Rebecca.

August 12, 1843.

Felix has been here for a week, and his affairs have made such progress that nothing is wanting but the king's signature to the contract. On Sunday he conducted the anniversary of the thousand years in the cathedral, went to Potsdam afterwards for the general rehearsal of Taubert's 'Medea' and a court-concert, and slept the night at a dreadful inn, of which he gave us a most amusing account. Fancy! a poodle jumped out of the bed he was going to occupy, just as one did at Ricorsi, of fatal memory, on our tour. The next day Lenné made him promise always to stay at his house in future. On Monday 'Medea' was performed; on Tuesday he came here, played the organ, and dined with Lord Beefsteak, where he and Madame Viardot 'made music' after dinner, came home full of good stories, and left on Wednesday morning. It is now almost certain that he will conduct the symphony-concerts next winter; also, I believe, two oratorios and the cathedral music.

Felix to Rebecca.

Leipzig: August 10, 1843.

I have been a very irregular correspondent, for which you must forgive me, but I have been very busy and in great confusion, besides which it is partly your own fault. Your first delightful letter said that you were on the point of leaving Freiburg (which I regretted), that you were going to send away the servant (which I also regretted), and that I might write to you at Vevay (which suited me very well). Two days after comes Jakoby from Berlin, and when I begin to tell him all the news he laughs at me, and says that before he left a letter had arrived from you with an alteration of plans, which pleased me very much. I ought of course to have written at once to Freiburg, but I had to go to Berlin for the anniversary, and had

a long, disagreeable correspondence with Massow, which put me out of spirits for a week. I saw Dirichlet start from Berlin to join you, and resolved to wait till I had something definite to say about next winter, and could date from Leipzig, where I arrived only yesterday, and write to-day to greet you in Wonderland. If the King of Prussia accepts Herr von Massow's proposals, which perfectly satisfy *me*, I shall have to go to Berlin in October, and stay there for the time. The King's assent will most likely be given at once, so I have been consulting Paul about a house, and he assures me that you would not mind my occupying yours. Every nook and corner of it, it is true, will recall the past, but still it would be wrong to give way to the feeling to the extent of choosing another house. It is strange that I should come to Berlin the very winter you are away. I have accepted an engagement for a music-festival in the Palatinate (at Zweibrücken) for June of next year, and intend going to Frankfort with my whole family about the end of May. Perhaps we may meet in that land of fruit and wine. You will shake your head at my travelling plans and flightiness generally, but, thank God, Cécile and the children are as well as they can be, and I am as fond of travelling as ever. And why may not I play the fine gentleman, and spend the summer in one place and the winter in another? Even if nothing comes of it, the plans are pleasant.

But enough of myself. Here come Cécile and Carl, the latter with a live crayfish, which he sets crawling on the floor, while Marie and Paul scream with delight. The other day I heard Paul making a tremendous noise in the next room, and Carl calling out 'Encore! Encore!' When Cécile went to see what it was all about, Carl said, 'Mamma, I wanted to know what kind of voice Paul had, so we are having a rehearsal.' Marie was standing by, and she said quite seriously, 'Paul has really a very strong voice for singing.' They are all dear, good children and a great blessing, and even the baby looks about quite intelligently with his blue eyes.

On Monday I was present at the 'Medea of Euripides' at Potsdam. An invitation had been sent to me for the general rehearsal the day before (I was 'commanded' to attend the

rehearsal, a courtier would say). Ah me! if only the story of Cassandra were not being acted before our eyes every day, ourselves taking part in it but too often! How correct my prophecy turned out again! The audience was both disgusted and *ennuyé*. How bad and how poor most of the scenes are! Taubert had taken all possible pains with the music, but what good can that do? The foundation is rotten, and it is impossible to build anything worth having upon it. The good people of Berlin will have had enough of the old Greeks by this time, I fancy! Now Tieck wants to inspire them with the 'Midsummer-night's Dream.' I have something to say in it, for I have written some music for it, which I should like to play you some day or other. I am busy also with some capriccios for quartet, various songs with and without words, part-songs for the open air, etc. A symphony is also making slow progress.

Eichendorf's song—

> Durch schwankende Wipfel schiesst goldener Strahl,
> Tief unter den Gipfeln das neblige Thal;
> Fern hullt es vom Schlosse, das Waldhorn ruft,
> Es wiehern die Rosse, in die Luft, in die Luft! etc.
>
> (Through trembling trees the golden sunbeams shoot,
> The valley in the mist lies deep below;
> The huntsman's horn calls from the castle yonder,
> The eager horses neigh, let 's onward, onward, etc.)

was to be translated into English with the others, but they wrote to me that they had been obliged to substitute a different poem altogether, as it was German that no Englishman could understand, and some Germans over there who had been asked had declared they could not understand it either!

Do I know Badenweiler! And you recommend me to read the very poem of Hebel's which became a byword with us on our wedding-trip! But it does not begin 'Zu Basel in der Stadt' (In Basle Town), but 'Z' Möllen in der Post' (At the Posthouse of Mülheim), and on your letter is the genuine red stamp, 'Mülheim,' which you did not see of course, but which I recognised the moment I saw your handwriting. It sent my thoughts far away. A year ago to-day I went with Paul from the Prieuré de Chamounix to the Flégère; the scenery was rather finer there

than in the kitchen-garden of No. 3 Leipziger Strasse, or even in the Milchwiese at Leipzig. Think of it! greet every fir and every nut-tree for me, but most of all the brooks, which bubble and splutter as I do when I want to describe anything beautiful. I believe that is the reason I am so fond of hearing them. Sometimes they hiccup too.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: August 19, 1843.

. . . I must tell you something that has happened here, which will find its way into all the newspapers in the world to-day. Our beautiful opera-house has gone the way of all theatres, and been burnt to the ground. The walls are still standing a melancholy ruin, but the inside is completely gutted; the neighbouring buildings, however, have been saved, owing chiefly to the fine, still night. The wind carried the flames towards the library, and all efforts were directed to that point, and to the palace of the Prince of Prussia.

The last representation yesterday consisted of two comedies by Kotzebue, in which Döring appeared, and a ballet, probably the cause of the whole disaster. The day before yesterday I had agreed to go with the Pauls, but I sent word in the morning that I would not because of the heat, and now I am sorry for it.

We heard the first alarm at half past ten, and I spent half the night in the yard with Minna, Sophie, and the watchman. We soon heard where the fire was, and I own that I was really sorry, and felt as if we were losing an old friend, for we could tell even from our house that there was no hope of saving the building. I missed having a man to protect me, for I should have liked to have gone to the Pauls',[1] but could not well take the watchman away from the yard, and was afraid of going alone. This morning I was there before eight o'clock, and found that Paul had actually cleared his office, and had had all his papers removed to his other rooms; there is not a doubt that that part of the town would have been in danger if the Catholic church

[1] They lived at 51 Jägerstrasse.

G. Lejeune Dirichlet.

had caught fire. I went over the whole scene of the disaster with Albertine. All the outside walls are intact, but parts of the balustrade are missing, and the statues were pulled down by the firemen with great hooks, and fell with a crash. The inside is a horrible confusion of smoke, water, timber, and rubbish —you know all the horrors that follow such a catastrophe. The date 1743 in gold letters above the chief entrance remains, and the two wire-covered programme-cases are still hanging at the side of the door with the bills of the last representation uninjured. There was of course a great crowd, but it was so orderly and well-behaved that we could walk about anywhere. The great steam-engine was in full work close to the ruin, so I had an opportunity of making its acquaintance. Thus the finest square in Berlin, so lately adorned with the pretty, well-laid-out gardens, will be a scene of desolation for years, and who knows whether it will ever be so beautiful again! If I were the king, I would have it rebuilt on the old plan, though of course with new arrangements. It will be easy to produce something different, but hard to produce anything better. Of all the theatres I know, the opera-house was always my favourite. It seems to me quite symbolic that it should have been burnt down; the opera itself was a thing of the past, so why have a house for what does not exist? Now farewell—I should not be able to talk of anything but the fire to-day if I went on. My love to the whole caravan, and tell that tall mathematician that he might write a word or two now and then.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Vevay: August 29.

. . . The very date of this letter will make you smile, dear Fanny; for behold, here we are still, while the dear letters I am longing for are most probably waiting for us at Nice. On Saturday everything was packed for starting, but Ernst, who has apparently made up his mind to play us a trick every time we think of moving on, was so feverish in the night that we had to send for the doctor next morning, and stay and nurse him for a few days. Our lovely but hot drive to Montreux, Chillon, etc. (Paul will take you the whole excursion), was too much for him.

We have been discussing our plans with the doctor, and he strongly advises us not to go to Nice before October, and everybody agrees that it is only a winter resort, and is at other times, in autumn especially, exceedingly hot, and stormy at the same time. As I do not feel ill enough to wish to spend the whole winter there, we laid our wise heads together, and took council, while Ernst, who looks as rosy and roguish as ever, was getting perfectly well. The conclusion we arrived at was that we would consider our stay here and in Badenweiler sufficient *villegiatura* for me (this lazy, careless life agrees with me, and I am rising like a cake, so that the cap in my bonnet, which used to touch my nose at Berlin, is now quite a long way from it), and so make our way by the direct route, over the Simplon and through the Italian lakes, to Florence and Rome, where we shall arrive in good time, if we do not linger for ever at one place again.

Wednesday.—My letter was interrupted yesterday by our going for a sail on the lake, which was calm, as you will imagine from the fact that *I* ventured my precious person on it. Oh, it was indeed most lovely, quite southern! Altogether the evenings are the best part of the day here, and the stars are so bright and look so lovely, reflected in the lake with the moon, which has just risen. Yesterday several of the boats had torches, as you used to describe at Naples, and I begin to imagine that nothing in the world can be more beautiful, when up comes somebody from Como and assures us that the lake there is still finer, and goes on to talk so much about the myrtle-hedges, etc., that I feel sure we shall never be able to leave the place; and if you keep stopping everywhere, how are you to see all you want to see? Here is a piece of news for those disposed to make fun of their neighbours: Dirichlet is growing a beard like a bandit, which rouses great interest among the German population here, but to my mind looks very comical on his honest face.

I hear no music at all, unless you can call the drumming of the English people on the piano in the reading-room by that name; a pianoforte arrangement of 'Robert le Diable' lies there, and each new-comer plays it through twenty times over. Please tell Felix our plans, as they appear after the ninety-ninth altera-

tion. I am quite ashamed of our fickleness, and try to remember great men in history who have suffered from the same complaint, but I can only find *le sage Memnon* and *Peter in der Fremde*. The latter is our counterpart, I believe. An old Scotchman here told me as a great piece of news that the King of Prussia had engaged Mendelssohn for the sacred music. 'Indeed!' said I.

Fanny to Rebecca.

August 27, 1843.

. . . Felix's long, long affair is settled at last, the king has signed, and so, thank goodness, we shall have some good music this winter. As his luck never forsakes him, we can only call it a fortunate coincidence that this year the orchestra will have less to do than usual, from the opera-house having been burnt down. You know that he is going to conduct the orchestra-soirées. Do not fret at losing his first winter here, for no symphony can compare to the blue sky you will behold, and there is no voice like the sea. Naples is the grandest *aria di bravura* God ever composed, and Pompeii the finest 'requiem'; you will never get tired of them. I am looking forward eagerly to your first letters from the land of wonders, for I believe there are few people on whom it will make so much impression; not many feel as much as you do. Now all the old longings that I have this summer so successfully lulled to sleep, that I did not even care to drive as far as Charlottenburg, will rise again. But really the garden is indescribably beautiful. I have never seen it so nice before, the cool, wet weather we had at first has kept everything so fresh and green. The whole of August has been warm and fine, and in ten days the grass and foliage got quite brown; then the Stralauer Fischzug[1] brought a thunder-storm with torrents of rain, which poured down the terrace in streams, as you have seen it do. Since then the weather has been glorious again, the air as mild and soft as you could breathe anywhere. All the green is refreshed again, and looks remarkably well preserved for its age, with hardly any bare places at all. This week brings to an end my pleasant life

[1] A popular festival at Berlin, which takes place on August 24.

with the Woringens, and I say, as you do, that I could not have believed it possible to love those girls more than I did before, but find it really is so. You ought to see how much the industrious creatures have managed to get through in these short two months; they have run errands, written, sewed, painted, arranged, really to an extraordinary extent, and all with such method! If Korff does not make Rosa happy beyond measure, I shall kill him to a certainty.

Schuhmacher is sure to find a place with Felix, who could not be more lucky, stepping with one foot into your house, and with the other into your servant. This would be all very fine, if I knew of any place near for you; the thought of it occupies me so much that I dreamt lately that I had taken very nice apartments for you over the way, with but one drawback, which was, that the only means of getting into them was by climbing over the roof. Shall I take them?

Rebecca to Fanny.

Genoa: September 15, 1843.

. . . Now at last, dear Fanny, I can shake hands with you from across the Apennines and across the Po, which *we* passed without any adventures and without the legate's permission; the Ticino, the Simplon—and so much besides—now lie between us, and how much beauty that comprises you yourself know. But if the truth must be told, I have not yet fallen into the right mood for Italy. Do not cry out upon us at once, for it will come, and shall come, and this is only the North of Italy, where we get fine moments, but whole days of disagreeables. I will proceed chronologically, although I have sent Felix an account of our journey already.

On the 31st we tore ourselves with difficulty away from Vevay. The weather, the lake, and the lights had been so exceedingly beautiful for the last few days that you can imagine better than I can describe it all. We drove to Martigny, and the whole way I kept regretting that dear father turned back at Bex, and so never saw the Lago Maggiore. The next morning, September 1, we undertook a venturesome expedition, and walked (that is to say, I rode) at five in the morning up

the Col de Balme, to see some snow. I did not know what a glorious scene of ice and snow awaited us the next day on our journey through the Valais and over the Simplon. I had to walk down, so it was a most fatiguing excursion, but very wonderful, and now that it is over I think it well worth the aching of my knees, which lasted for four days. As Hensel will most likely have come home by this time, he must be scolded; who can talk about Switzerland without having seen the Valais and the lake of Geneva? It is just as if I were to talk about Italy before I had seen—say Florence, at any rate. What a number of finished pictures have I seen on the road through the Valais alone, with local colour, burnt colour, outline, motives, and all the rest of your artist's gibberish. Some were pictures that only required to be copied faithfully to make them interesting, but others could not have been painted by everybody. Calame knows how to do it, and so does Gudin, and so did the ancients. As for yourselves, you should go and have a look at them. Near the foot of the Simplon, just as you turn a corner and cross a bridge, you come upon an old nook with gray towers, the mountain in the background, and beyond the whole range of Monte Rosa. I tell you, you wretch of a Hensel, that it is sub-b-blime. The Simplon pass on the Swiss side is another *aria di bravura*, O Fanny *de my alma*, of Nature and of those who constructed the road, which is indeed marvellous. It coquets, so to speak, with the precipices, and a gallery with bow-windows runs under a waterfall; on that side as far as you can see, above, below, and around, everything is green, fertile, and well cultivated, and the road is in the best order. As soon as you have passed the village of Simplon, where we drank your health in *vino d'Asti*, you come upon an area of bare grotesquely shaped rocks, where no housemaid has been with her broom for ages, and the road is ill-kept to a degree. A soft wind was blowing as we reached the first *dogana*[1] of our journey, where a couple of francs secured the greatest possible civility. Dirichlet said, 'J'espère que vous serez humains,' and one of the officers replied, 'Et nous aussi, nous espérons que vous serez humain.' Dirichlet had been tor-

[1] Custom-house.

menting himself and us the whole day as to how he might smuggle a packet of cigars through, but he showed them at the custom-house to the officer, who looked round to see if any one was by, and then said, 'Mettez-les vite dans votre poche afin qu'on ne les voie pas.' Then the beggars, who hold their legs in a peculiarly crooked position, such as I have seen nowhere else, and the picturesque vines, which look like trees! The inn at Domo d'Ossola, where we passed the night, is already quite Italian, for it is all over balconies. The *cameriere* opened at least twenty large rooms for us for that one night. Bulletin: six dead, twenty dismissed cured, remainder uncountable. I need not tell you that I am alluding to the fleas. But seriously, it was a delightful evening; we sat for a long time in light attire on the long, narrow balcony. The next day we drove to Baveno. Dirichlet climbed up the Monterone, to have a last look at the snow-mountains, and I with the children and Minna went to the islands in a gondola. Isola Bella is lovely, and it gives one almost a poetical feeling to find this compendium, this extract of Italy, in one garden just as we are entering the country. The full moon illumined sea and sky for our sail homewards. The next day, the 4th, we shipped ourselves and the carriage and crossed the lake to Laveno, where we came in for a genuine Italian comedy. A fair was going on, and of course all the people had nothing better to do than to watch our carriage being landed; and we created so much interest that when the 120 *faquini*, as they call themselves, began grumbling at the *mancia*, a party formed itself among the people and stood up for Dirichlet and abused the *faquini*. Then we went by Varese, where the Milanese go for their *villegiatura*, to Como, where the best hotel, the Angelo, was, oh, such a dirty inn! Really, Fanny, some things are too bad! The doors for instance could only be touched with the tongs, not to mention unmentionables. During these first days I have been undergoing the most dreadful nausea, crying several times a day, and turning sick at all I saw and smelt; but I am getting better now. On the 5th we made a steamboat excursion on the lake to Villa Serbelloni and Sommariva, where we saw the first pines and cypress-trees, enjoyed the beautiful view of the Lago di Lecco, and break-

fasted under the sycamores at Cadenabbia. In the evening at Como we met Jacoby, who however went back straight to Milan, where we followed him on the afternoon of the 7th. It is the fashion now to puff up the Lake of Como beyond everything else, but I do not fall in with it; I prefer Maggiore to Como, and the Lake of Geneva to both. The evening at Milan was again lovely; altogether, we cannot be grateful enough for the weather of the last fortnight. We passed under a campanile whilst the Ave Maria was ringing. At Milan we got at first into a perfect hole of an inn; but as it was late and dark, and the children were sleepy, we put up there for the night. The instant we saw the place by daylight we resolved to leave it and go to the Albergo Reale, where Jacoby is staying. There we found pleasant little apartments, with a terrace adjoining the *salotto*, on which Ernst can run about, and the world at once looked a different place. Our first walk was of course to the cathedral, and right up on to the roof, from whence it looks indescribably beautiful, just like a forest of white cypress-trees; I remained an hour with Walter and Jakoby, giving myself up quietly to its influence. This is the way I like to see everything, and I intend to take Florence in the same way. It was a festival of the Virgin, and people were coming in and out, and all the pictures were decorated with flowers and illuminated. Next we went with Jakoby and Borchardt to the Ambrosian Library, where all the chests of rare manuscripts and vignettes were opened in honour of two 'membres de l'Académie.' Then we went to see the remains of Leonardo's Cenacolo, where I saw a very small engraving of a Christ, *en profile*, which I instantly recognised from a sketch in Hensel's book. Thence we went to Robescelli's, who keeps, besides his pictures, a *café*, where we had so bad a breakfast that we declared we would send the bill to Hensel without even paying the postage, if the pictures were not fine enough to impress ignorant people like ourselves. But the head of Christ by Leonardo [1] had such a powerful effect even on the mathematical minds, that instead of sending the bill we voted an address of thanks. This Christ has been

[1] Hensel had been charmed with it, and wanted to purchase it for the Berlin Museum.

bought by an Englishman, as well as a Madonna by Murillo, with an ugly but interesting child. In addition to this and many other beautiful things, he showed us a portrait by Velasquez, which I, to everybody's amusement, thought strikingly like Borchardt. The picture-dealer told us that a *Prussiano* had been there, a *vero conosciutore* with a real enthusiasm for art, *il signore Hensele*. At this we were *en pays de connaissance*, and I promised to send his respectful compliments.

On Monday, the 11th, we went to Genoa. I will not weary you with accounts of difficulties about passports, the dirt of our *vetturino*, and the dulness of the road from Milan to Novi, but will go on at once to pleasant things, for I have nearly filled the single sheet allowed by the post. At Certòsa, near Pavia, I saw the first altars with Florentine mosaic which you, dear Fanny, mentioned so often. Altogether the arrangements for worship there are splendid. Near Novi we saw the Apennines for the first time in the brilliant hues of sunset, and came to the conclusion that Italian colours are no delusion after all.

To-day we have been driving round the town. The Mediterranean was dark blue, and it was altogether one of those moments which well repay one for the money one spends, and the dirt and fatigue one encounters in travelling.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: September 22, 1843.

. . . Felix has brought with him your letter from Milan, which is quite like one of Nicolai's, all fleas and grumbles. I should be very sorry for your disappointment with Italy if I were not convinced that it would pass away, and give place to an abiding state of enchantment. Bother it all, our tastes cannot be so very different, but that all the bad smells and fleabites in the world will not be able to prevent you from feeling as happy as a king. As for smells, I believe they are worse round Milan than anywhere. I am longing to see how soon your grumbling will give place to a different tune, and I am surprised that it did not on the Lake of Como. But I decidedly approve of your pushing on or lingering, just as the fit takes you. If

those tiresome letters from home did not tie one down to a more or less fixed route, one could not do anything better than start without an idea of whether one would arrive at Constantinople or at Lisbon.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Florence: September 23, 1843.

Dearest Fanny,—Again I have so much to tell you that I do not know where to begin. Since we left Genoa a few days ago we have seen so much that is interesting and lovely, that I am still in a state of bewilderment, and, although we arrived here the evening of the day before yesterday, I have seen nothing yet but lodgings. I must have a little repose, after seeing so many beauties of nature, before my poor little mind can be capable of taking in the most sublime works of art ever produced. We left Genoa in the afternoon of the 17th, and drove along the famous Riviera di Levante, which the whole world does not agree to praise for nothing. As Frederic says, it is really supernatural. Now running down close to the sea, then through villages with charming country houses, in gardens full of orange-trees and oleanders with large aloes growing out of the walls, now turning into the mountains, then coming round a corner on to a high embankment above the sea, all the time passing through the most profuse southern vegetation of figs, cypresses, and pines. We spent the night at Chiavari, which stands in the middle of a large plain near the sea, and is a perfect garden of orange-trees. There we slept for the first time under covers like those we use for butter and cheese, on account of the mosquitoes. From thence the road turns into the mountains, and has galleries and splendid views of the sea in all directions. And what a sea! and what a sky! The hills are dotted all over with villas, villages with tall campaniles, and convents always at the most beautiful spots—in La Spezia they call the friars *mangiacanti*—and the journey is as exciting as a novel, of which the *dénoûment* is the Gulf of Spezia. It is like fairy-land, the atmosphere makes everything look so light and airy. One could not have believed that earth and

stones could have been seen through such a glamour. And those high rocks rising above the gulf to the left are the marble quarries of Carrara. But, oh! what is the use of my waxing enthusiastic on paper; you do not know, you cannot even imagine, all these wonders. How you two Hensels can venture to talk about Italy without having seen the Gulf of Spezia passes my comprehension! That alone would be a sufficient excuse for coming here again. The hotel was splendid, thoroughly Italian in every respect, being an old palace of the Doria's, with an enormous gateway, marble staircase, a *salon* at least forty feet high, windows three times the size of ours in the Leipziger Strasse—with tiny leaded panes like a garden hot-bed, and looking as if they had never been cleaned since the days of Andrea Doria—four bare, dirty walls, and high above the door a copy of Titian's Ascension. The other rooms were in similar taste. We had lobster and fish for dinner. A little garden with alleys of oleanders and orange-trees, intertwined with garlands of roses, leads down from the town to the sea. After dinner we meant to go for a walk, but a lad with a boat persuaded, or rather forced us, to go for a sail on the gulf, and amused us immensely with his tricks and nonsense. Altogether it is only those who have seen it who can believe the amount of wit, fibbing, eloquence, ogling, and making of fine speeches expended here in extorting an extra penny or two. The other day we went, also by boat, to Porto Venere, which lies right in the sea, just as the towns did in the Arabian Nights, or, which is much the same, as Amalfi does according to the pictures. Opposite Porto Venere is an island called Palmaria, a mere rock, with vines, pines, and olive-trees, inhabited only by fishermen, except for a family of English, who have lived there for ten years, summer and winter, in a lonely house. Lord Byron also lived on the Gulf for some time. Napoleon is the favourite of the people, and everybody, old and young, talks of what he said, planned, and did; *ma è morto*, they add. In our hotel the rooms towards the sea were occupied by a German prince, whom they called the *Principe di Lips*. It is the hereditary prince of Lippe, who is travelling incognito, like old Gans, under the name of Schwanthaler. Unfortunately I was

sea-sick on the way back from Porto Venere, although the sea was perfectly calm, but two hours' sleep restored me enough to venture on a walk and climb up a little hill behind Spezia, where we remained till the evening. There was no German turf for us to sit upon, but I picked a bouquet of bay with berries, exquisite heath, and myrtle in blossom from the hedges, and the Gulf lay at our feet. Unfortunately, we only stayed there a day and a half. Carrara was another interesting point on our journey to Lucca; it is the true Eldorado of marble, for, as you know, all the houses and all the stones are made of it. The way to the quarries lies through a shady green valley, which looks so pretty from Spezia, with a brook, clear as crystal, running over pebbles of white marble and bridges of large rough blocks. I felt it almost unseemly to be treading on such costly material with my dusty travelling-shoes. The whole of the little town lives on marble of course, and the numerous sculptors' studios and workshops, all with their large doors open, displayed a motley company, apparently on the best of terms—colossal kings and arch-dukes, no less than four Venuses de Medici, several new likenesses of Bosio, which are copied here by the dozen, chimney-pieces, tables, lemons, potatoes, etc., and I believe even the bread we bought was also of marble—at any rate it was hard enough. Before one house were at least twenty large baths, a whole cartload of mortars was ready to start, and enormous blocks were being carried down to the saw-mills and places for polishing on carts drawn by oxen, at whom the drivers shouted and swore terribly. The few hours we spent there, hot as the sun was, interested me intensely. As we had one foot in the carriage ready to start, we were cordially addressed in German by a gentleman who introduced himself as the sculptor W., a perfect stranger to us. He almost dragged us to visit his studio, and then escorted us back to the carriage with a vow of eternal friendship, to be renewed in Rome. It will not be over warm on my side.

Will you, more especially Hensel, be offended if I tell you how we were cheated in Modena and Lucca (Carrara is in Modena; we were not at the capital) by having four horses and three postilions imposed upon us? We had taken *vetturino*

from Milan to Genoa, and found that it implied selling ourselves, body and soul, so—one's last experiences always striking one as the worst in this country—we travelled with post-horses from Genoa here, but they charged us for at least six horses, and gave us one and a half. At each station Dirichlet had a quarrel with the post-master in his choicest Italian, and referred him to the tariff, which he had with him, at which the post-master invariably regretted his inability to read, and gave us as many horses as he pleased, charging what terms he liked. So it went on, each dispute being a lesson in Italian, till we got to the State of Modena, where matters got much worse, and we were driven the last stage before reaching Lucca by a postilion who had killed at least one person already, I am certain. I was quite thankful when we reached Lucca alive, but not a room was to be had in the hotels, on account of a congress of naturalists. We had just made up our minds to drive on through the night, in spite of our postilion's imprecations, when a man stepped forward whom the people called *Signore il Professore*, and offered us lodgings in his house. The landlord in front of whose house we were stopping advised us to go there, and said it was very *pulito*, a word that occurs at least three times in every sentence, on the principle, I suppose, that everybody is most proud of the virtue he has least claim to. We accepted, and found ourselves in pleasant quarters, with a very handsome woman, in an extraordinary dress or rather undress. The *signor professore* was a surgeon, and this apparently piquant adventure merely ended in my appearing next morning as if I were suffering from scarlet fever, such havoc had the bugs and mosquitoes made of my face and hands. They are still in a sad state, and the red bumps have a charming effect on my sunburnt countenance. In the meantime it is night, so I will go on about Florence to-morrow.

September 26.

Here we are, in our own lodgings, which will explain why my letter has lain fallow so long; and now you must excuse blots, for Ernst is riding about the room, and exclaiming *il passaporto* every other minute. We did not find it easy to get rooms at all, for almost all the well-furnished lodgings are

let only by the season of six months. However, we have got some, *pas si doré que j'avais espéré*, as Figaro says, but *pulito*, and with carpets. The people, too, are very nice. The landlady, having been cook to Marshal Maison, has undertaken to board us. I am seeing everything *pianissimo*. We spent an hour at the Pitti Palace, and I was perfectly bewildered; but I had been so before with the dying Patroclus in the Loggia on the Piazza del Gran Duca. To-day we go to the Uffizii, and we shall probably go somewhere every afternoon. We have left Jakoby behind this time, but he seems to be enjoying himself at Pisa, or he would have been here already. We have found he has one talent you would hardly expect, and that is, he reads aloud very well, though rather pretentiously. To my mind he resembles Italy a little, for you have a good deal to get over before you reach the fine qualities; his mind, however, is a superior one in every respect. I am quite delighted with the beauty of the people here, and wish all day I were a painter, to catch some of the many pictures I see at every turn. How happy Hensel must have been here with his innumerable sketch-books! It is so amusing, too, to see the exquisite attitudes they fall into, and the eyes they make, such as would turn a Berlin drawing-room wild, only to get a *quattrino* out of you: it is indeed a case of the adaptation of great means to small ends. I wish I could put a select troupe of the postilions we had from Genoa here into uniforms, and set them down in the middle of one of our Berlin balls. Woe betide the ladies! Especially on Sundays, when they have washed themselves! The cleanliness here is almost worse than the dirt. Do you remember how, when one has made one's way with carefully tucked-up skirts across a muddy street, some fellow will drive by and churn all the dirt up into one's face? or, worse still, empty the dust-pan out of a window just in front of you?

Now for something pretty again. It is pleasant to see on the road from Genoa to Florence how each town has its own industry. In the places along the coast they all sit in front of their houses making lace; elsewhere they do white embroidery, and beginning from Pistoja they plait straw, all, however, with such grace! And then, the vivacity with which they talk and

gesticulate over their work! '*Prendono qui moglie in tenera etá*,' a fisher-boy said to us at Spezia. I asked Dirichlet if the cabmen at home talked like that. Dear Fanny, please take those lodgings to which we have to climb over the roof—they will do nicely. Hensel should dream that you are living on the roof, and then you can turn it into a duet.

A statue of the dying Abel, done by Dupré of Siena, who was formerly a wood-carver, is exciting much interest here. We have seen it, and it is really extraordinary for a first work. Up to this time the man and his family have been in positive want, but now he has orders for ten years, his portrait has been painted and engraved, and at Siena they took the horses out of his carriage. They say he was nearly out of his mind. It is a cruel thing, this public! Now, at last, good-bye to you all, dear brothers and sisters. Write much and often, for your letters are a chief part of my pleasure.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Florence: October 6.

I wait one hour, I wait two hours, but no letter from my Fanny, though I had one yesterday from Paul and Albertine, declaring that you write to me every week. That must be a delusion of theirs, for we have been here a fortnight, and, excepting one forwarded from Nice, not a letter have we had from you. For that reason solely I am writing to you again, as I believe it to be the best means of conjuring one from you to-morrow, just as we used to order the soup in the hope of bringing Paul to dinner on Sundays. I perceive from Paul's letter that my poor epistles go the round of the family, a mark of attention which touches me deeply, especially as I have been so candid in confessing all that puzzled me at first. But now all that is past and gone, and I thank God every day for allowing me to see all the wonders here, and drink my fill of them. As you know, Italy begins *pianissimo*, and goes on *crescendo al fortissimo* the longer you stay here. Two of its principal elements are wanting in the *North* of Italy—the sea and art: the former we saw in all its glory on our way from Genoa, and the latter—why, we are in Florence, and I need say

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no more. I am beginning to think that a month is not nearly enough, especially as in every week there are at least nine saints' days, on which the galleries are closed. I have got quite accustomed to seeing at least six Raphaels a day, and each time I enter the Uffizii or the Palazzo Pitti a sort of delicious awe comes over me, as well as a feeling of the vital importance of the moment. I actually dreaded my first visit to the Uffizii, and lingered quite half an hour in the Loggia di Orcagna before I could make up my mind to go in. But to my great joy, I find that every day the atmosphere of eternal beauty which surrounds one impresses me more deeply.

Since October 1 we have been wonderfully favoured in weather, the air is so warm and clear, so blue, and so delightfully fresh; but on September 29 (*horribile dictu!*) it snowed here; even the low hills near were completely covered, and at noon we had a fine Berlin sun without warmth, and an east wind, which, though they called it *vento grecale*, was none the less icy. I maintained, of course, that in our northern climate we never had anything of the kind. I have been following all your advice, dear Fanny, and have fallen in love with the Duchess of Urbino, though I believe that she was more in love with him than he with her, and I have quite a special affection for the Madonna del Cardellino, and for the portraits of the popes, and for the Seggiola, and for the portrait of a beautiful woman with her hands one upon the other, and for all the others, and for the Disputa by Andrea del Sarto with the saints looking such fanatics, and, oh! for the Venus de Medici. And what do you think of the Niobe group? The day before yesterday we were at the theatre in a box with red sofas, a marble table, and mirrors. This was my first acquaintance with this kind of luxury, which enables one, not to listen indeed, but to talk through an opera of Donizetti's. We have also been to a conversazione, at Countess S.'s, the last of the Medici, who is exactly like the grandmother of Goethe's little princess, small, always on the twirl, and always chattering, but really the 'last' of the Medici, and very kind, as is everybody with whom we have happened to make acquaintance. These conversaziones are exactly like one of Aunt Levy's Saturdays, with frescoes and

statues. Minna cannot get over their giving us nothing to eat at a party, and my only regret is that there is nowhere in the environs of Florence where we can ramble about in the fields and have a picnic *à l'allemande*. That is what my soul is longing for this lovely weather, but there are villas everywhere, and all of them let. As you see, I am thinking of your Villa Wolchonsky. The Arno does not show itself off to us as it did to you. Just now it is not unlike a gutter; indeed, all the rivers are dried up, which does not improve the scenery.

I think of Hensel every time I have to use *tale quale* or any of his other expressions, which we used to make such jokes of. It always feels strange to see anything in reality which you have known from pictures and description long before. Thus the other day I had stayed rather late with the children in the Boboli Gardens and was coming home, almost in the dark (you know how easily that may happen here, when the night follows so immediately after sunset), when I met a procession of monks in those white masks with the holes for the eyes that one knows so well, carrying a dead body to the grave with torches and hymns. It is a thing one must have seen very often before one could get accustomed to it. But I have seen nothing else here that could frighten one, and we have often been in the streets till midnight, without a *thought* of fear. The wretched state of the locks is in itself a proof of the security of the town.

Your angel by Luca della Robbia I have not seen yet, but I have seen the fine bas-reliefs in the *Accademia delle belle arti*, and a beautiful sacred picture by Giovanni, in Santa Croce, the Pantheon of Florence, where Dante, Michel Angelo, Galileo, and the rest of the *haute volée* have monuments. It is disgusting to see how they idolise Galileo now, to make people forget their old sins, but if another were to arise among them to-day they would treat him quite as badly. It was very touching to me to see his garden at Bellosguardo, where he lived, in which he used to dig, as they forbade him even to talk about science. The other day in the Pitti I was standing with Dirichlet before a painting of Perugino's, and after talking Italian for some time to Italians he said to me in German, 'How true it is that Perugino paved the way for Raphael!'

upon which a painter who was copying the picture turned round, and, bestowing on us a scrutinising glance to see whether we were worth the trouble, said, 'You are quite right in that.' He turned out to be a very pleasant Hanoverian. In the Uffizii we met another agreeable German painter, but as a rule we feel quite Italian. At nine o'clock in the morning, after our breakfast *en famille*, comes Signor Paperini, a teacher whom we engaged at first for Walter only, but found that he spoke such exquisite Italian that we determined to profit by his instruction and take lessons ourselves. He is a very nice, well-educated man, speaks English and French well, and is learning German, but makes such delightful blunders that I do not feel a bit ashamed of mine in Italian. I get on pretty well with speaking, only it does not do for me to hear or speak English, as I find myself saying 'yes.' Dirichlet speaks with less ease, but more grammatically and classically. I am still at loggerheads with the indicative and conjunctive, and most of all with the *passato determinato*. All the rest of us but me have said *bastimento* for building, and been duly laughed at. 'Us' includes Jakoby and Borchardt. The latter murders the language rather than speaks it. Dirichlet invariably uses *mais* for *ma*, and *lontano* for *long*. We all have plenty of confidence, but it is dreadful the way we all try to find out the source of any fresh piece of learning one of us has mastered. They call white bread *semmeli e kiffeli* here: is it not droll? Greet the garden and the garden-hall for me; as yet I have not seen one more prettily laid out.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: October 18, 1843.

. . . This time I have something nice to talk about too. The 'Midsummer-night's Dream' has been dreamt in the new palace, and if I do not send this letter till to-morrow it will only be that I may tell you of the success of the first public performance, which takes place to-night. The whole thing was splendid, but the music is the most enchanting thing you ever heard. But I must go back a little. Last week the musicians

from Leipzig arrived, to be present at the *fête*. They are Hiller, David, Gade (who will present himself before you some day in Rome with a letter of introduction), and a delightful little Hungarian, Joachim, who, though only twelve, is such a clever violinist that David can teach him nothing more, and such a sensible boy that he travelled here alone, and lives by himself in the Rhenish Hotel, all of which seems quite natural and proper. These merry folk and Eckert (who will present himself before you some day in Rome *without* a letter of introduction) spent a couple of very amusing evenings with us, as the performance was delayed for two days; one at Paul's especially, where everybody that could fiddle fiddled, and everybody that could play played, but unfortunately not a soul amongst us had the smallest voice for the smallest song, every one being instrumentalists. On Saturday took place the great emigration. We had got hold of another ticket, and took Antonie with us. At the *Einsiedler* there was not a room to be had, so we seven ladies arranged our hair in Felix's room, and then proceeded to the palace. I sat next to Mme. Tieck, who sent her love to you, and was a pleasant neighbour; behind me was Kugler's sister, who from sheer delight kept squeezing and pinching me the whole evening, but you know one can put up with that. The performance was almost too much for my nerves, for I have hardly ever known our mother so vividly present to my mind—I kept fancying I could hear her laugh. I missed you also very much. The only thing I did not like in the performance was the dresses, which Tieck obstinately insisted on having in the Spanish style of the seventeenth century, which disturbed me more than I could have believed possible; whereas the clowns were for the most part excellent, and even Gern, who to the terror of the fairies played the part of Bottom, was better than I had expected. The fairies, about thirty children from the school of dancing, were charming; and when they trooped into the theatre to the strain of that lovely march, the effect was quite magical. But the most beautiful part of the whole piece, and the only thing which I never thought much of in reading the play, is the last scene, where the court goes off in procession to the splendid wedding-march, and you hear the music

gradually dying away in the distance, till suddenly it breaks into the theme of the overture, and Puck and the fairies reappear on the empty stage. I assure you it is enough to make one cry. The interludes are real masterpieces, and were performed to perfection. Never did I hear an orchestra play so *pianissimo*. The three middle acts are separated by music alone, the curtain not falling at all; after the second comes a wonderful piece, representing Hermia seeking Lysander, which suddenly changes to a mad burlesque at the moment that the clowns appear in the forest expressing their delight at the beauty of the scene by comical gestures. It is irresistibly ludicrous. How delighted all the children of Berlin will be with this piece, for the lion and the ass are splendid. The ass opens its mouth wide and puts out its tongue, and when pretty Peasblossom in a little red cap and tiny Mustard-seed set to work to scratch its head, I can assure you, Walter, it is fine! But I must describe the Lion's costume. His jacket and trousers are of yellow-gray felt, his wig, made of shavings, hangs down to the ground, and his tail is an enormously long wisp of straw fastened on in an almost indecorously natural manner. Thisbe's attire is rather too extravagant for my taste: one of her stockings is hanging down, and she pulls it up when one of the courtiers remarks that Pyramus might hang himself with her garter; she has nothing womanly about her except a towel arranged as drapery. The dead-march for her and Pyramus is really stupendous; I could scarcely believe up to the last that Felix would have the impudence to bring it before the public, for it is exactly like the mock preludes he plays when you cannot get him to be serious. I am very curious to hear how this evening goes off; it is to be performed on three successive days, *et pas plus de billet que sur ma main*.

Thursday.—The first representation was most brilliant; it all went off splendidly, and the audience were enthusiastic. Felix was called for with immense applause, but did not come forward, and Mlle. Hagen apologised for him. Each of the pieces of music attracted attention, and was applauded. The overture was again played splendidly, and so was the rest of the music. Mlle. Hagen acts Puck, and, disagreeable as her way of

speaking is to me at times, I thought she played some parts with great grace and intelligence. Her way of gliding across the stage and being here and there and everywhere at once is inimitable. The theatre was of course full of our friends and acquaintances; we could not get four seats together, so I was alone in the *Parquet* with Sebastian, and had the Steffens, Aunt Levy, and the Friedheims near me. Up in the balcony were two imposing rows of Mendelssohns and Company. Paul declares that when 'Mendelssohn' was called for *he* stood up in front of the balcony looking as bland as possible, but no one took any notice of him. After the play we had tea and champagne at the Pauls'. To-day and to-morrow Felix conducts again, and we shall go once more to-morrow. On Saturday he leaves us. Is it not just like the luck of this fortunate man, that this first work of his youth, which established his fame, should again be brought forward in a form which will certainly cause it to find its way through the whole of Germany? We were mentioning yesterday what an important part the 'Midsummer-night's Dream' has always played in our house, and how we had all at different ages gone through the whole of the parts from Peasblossom to Hermia and Helena, 'and now it had come to such a glorious ending.' But we really were brought up on the 'Midsummer-night's Dream,' and Felix especially had made it his own, almost recreating the characters which had sprung from Shakespeare's exhaustless genius. From the wedding-march, so full of pomp but so thoroughly festal in its character, to the plaintive music at Thisbe's death, the fairy songs, the dances, the interludes, the characters, including such creatures as the clowns—all and everything has found its counterpart in music, and his work is on a par with Shakespeare's. But it is time to have done with the 'Midsummer-night's Dream.' 'And being done, thus Wall (my letter) away doth go.' Wall was very fine too. Moonshine had a live dog at Potsdam, but the beast rushed up to Lion and bit him, so he appeared yesterday with a stuffed one under his arm. He gets into such a state of mind over his part that at last he cries, which has a most amusing effect. Here we are again though, it is a mercy that my paper is full now! If only mother could have seen it! That

is my constant thought. I will not say that I am sorry you were not there, for I cannot pity you for anything you miss here. Besides, it will have become naturalised by the time you come home. Now it is really high time for me to begin to leave off; you know it is not a speedy process with me. When you come back you will be such a splendid Italian scholar that I shall be afraid of saying *Allegro ma non troppo* before you. You were quite good enough before.

Felix to Rebecca.

Leipzig: October 29.

From early morning to late at night I have had to sit at my desk writing out scores till my head ached, and so several Saturdays have passed without my being able to catch the mail. My last stay at Berlin too was a very fatiguing time. I had eleven full rehearsals and four performances in a fortnight, and got rather home-sick at last, from which it has taken me all the time since my return a week ago to recover. Now a man can take up his correspondence again—by which I do not mean such a letter as this, which does not come within that to me hateful term at all, but all my other letters—but I have nothing to tell you about but oboes and trumpets, and they do not bear description. There are twelve numbers in the 'Midsummer-night's Dream,' and the dead-march for Thisbe is quite in the style of my mock-preludes which used to make you laugh so; it is written for a clarinet, a bassoon, and a drum, but it is no good trying to describe it. Shall I have the chance of playing it to you in the Palatinate next summer? Eckert will arrive in Rome almost at the same time as this letter. Make him tell you all about us and the 'Midsummer-night's Dream.' He will give you a much better idea of it than the papers. I assure you that many times during each rehearsal and each performance I felt an extra pang of regret at your absence. It would have exactly suited you, and you would have entered so heartily into the success, and been so vexed with all the shortcomings. It is amusing, though, that the public of Berlin should be so surprised and delighted with our old favourite amongst the beloved William's plays. Yesterday it was performed at Berlin for the seventh time in

ten days, and in the morning not a ticket was to be had—so Paul writes.

One day lately Gustav Magnus, his wife, and brother Edward, and Mr. Türrschmiedt, came to see us most unexpectedly, and there we were all sitting together in our blue room. You know how it is when people meet only once in a way at Berlin, and so it was now—none of us could understand how we could have lived a day without meeting. They spent one day here out of their time at Dresden, and we all enjoyed ourselves very much. To-day Schubring from Dessau was here, and he is coming back to dinner, but I am taking a holiday, first writing to you, and then I mean to go and play billiards at the *café*. Yesterday I beat the marker four times (I should say he beat me five). I should very much like to know whether this letter is worth the postage to Rome. Please tell me by return of post, and I will make my arrangements accordingly. It ought to be altogether sublime, since its destination is Rome, but after all it comes from Leipzig, and I must date and sign it. You will be glad to hear that I am now living on larks and apple-sauce, playing billiards at the *café*, and strolling about the whole day long in the delightful summer air, which has for the last few days been reviving us all. Ah, but *broccoli*, *passeggiata*, *café greco! Cette délicieuse Rome*, as Berlioz used to say. He is now writing a series of articles in the *Journal des Débats* on his German tour, at which the musical gossips are in despair. He prints everything, and I am quite surprised that he has not yet mentioned Christel and Jette.[1] But Cécile enjoys it thoroughly. David brought her the paper the other day, and when she found my French letter printed as it is, with all its mistakes, I thought she would never stop laughing. She also is unaccountable, as you used to say of father. However, she is very well and blooming and merry, thank God, and is wearing her curls again, so that all who see her are quite charmed. Heaven preserve her and the four children just as they are, for they have never given us one uneasy moment yet. I had to give Paul a flogging, though, to-day, but there was no help for it: he struck Jette, and Cécile could not persuade him to beg her pardon, so I had to 'strike'

[1] Felix's servants.

in. But we neither of us indulged in any *rancune* against each other for this correction, which I could not have spared him, could I, you folks in Italy? This evening we have company, and Cécile asks me to suggest something to be handed round with the *bouillon* instead of patties. I have been pondering over it the whole morning without result. Just think it over, will you, in some of your orange groves! I have written nonsense enough, I think, by this time. Are you quite well? Has Dirichlet become quite Italian? Does Walter draw all he sees? and sing? What is Ernst about? Minna will not find anything new to learn in Italy, but don't let her forget those brown sauces? Our Hanna married her tailor some time ago, and is living happily and peaceably with him. Now and then she comes to see us of an afternoon, and eats a hearty meal again. Think of me when you see the two sages in the school of Athens, and when you meet Landsberg with his order. You may do so also on other occasions. And tell Jakoby that when he has differentiated the blue grotto I will set the marble-rocks of Carrara to music, but he cannot expect me to do so before. Not a word of sense shall be got out of me to-day. Farewell.

Extract from a Letter of Rebecca's to Fanny.

Florence: October 21, 1843

. . . This good news was indeed necessary to make up for the beginning of your letter, telling us about Sebastian's dislocated elbow. Poor fellow, he really has to go through all the miseries of life. You blockhead, take better care of yourself in future. What good are your acrobat's legs and your renowned capabilities for acting Pulcinello if you play such tricks as this over and over again? But it is better, is it not, to fall from a tree than to fall through in one's examination, and I wish you joy of your remove, although I am convinced that the credit of it belongs to your teacher and your mother.

This morning the *vetturino* has given me the *Caparra* to start for Rome, *viâ* Perugia and Foligno, on Wednesday, 25th. A good deal which I had put off till the end of our time must remain unseen. As for the churches, I forego them willingly,

having seen one with frescoes dating (so Albrecht Dürer says) from before the time the Italians had invented painting, and a huge Madonna by Cimabue. I was much interested in seeing these beginnings of art, but one specimen is enough.

I will write to Albertine next, and describe all the monsters we have seen, especially a little mannikin at Pavia, whom I shall never forget. He was no taller than Ernst, with an enormous head and the complacent-looking face of a *cretin*, and he ran beside our carriage with a tiny violin, upon which he scratched distressingly. Another one at Milan, with no legs, jumped about on a leather like a frog. Last Sunday on the way to Poggio Cajano we came in for a very edifying spectacle: all the women and girls were sitting in front of the houses on both sides of the street, having their hair combed for the week past and the week to come. We were quite amused, to be sure, they did it so *con amore*, and in the last village, where the toilets had been completed, they looked very nice. By the same token we had grapes and Vino Santo there, and I can remember the taste of them to this day.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Castiglione, a queer, dirty little place in the Apennines.

On the day after my last letter the weather cleared up a little, and we started directly after breakfast to see a few churches—San Lorenzo with the chapel of the Medici full of Buonarotti's monuments, where I was quite put out by the dance-music to which they sang the service, S. Marco, the Battisteria, and lastly the cathedral. We walked round for some time feasting our eyes on the cupola and the Campanile rising in the clear blue atmosphere, strolled about under the arcades of the Uffizii, and on to the Lungarno, lingering on all the bridges till dinner-time came, and in the afternoon went to the Boboli Gardens, p. p. c. We have become great *connoisseurs* in art, and insist on seeing everything that marks an epoch in its history. Each has his own special painter whom he affects. Dirichlet's is Perugino, and it is for the sake of the name I verily believe that we have engaged a *vetturino* from Perugia.

Jakoby runs after Annunciations, and gets a good deal teased about it, my *spécialité* is old Fiesole, while Borchardt admires all sorts, except Cimabue, who still scares us all. We shall perhaps become enthusiastic admirers of the enormous great toes at the Trinity, this being the country of miracles and conversions. We already began to turn our coats at the Academy. On Wednesday at half past four, just as I was getting up, we had a slight earthquake, the first in my experience; the bed shook, and the light was almost extinguished. It is a very strange sensation, but we started in spite of the evil omen, passing Sta. Croce and the beautiful hills round Florence in the glorious light of early morning, all full of regret at what we were leaving. It is very curious how one gets accustomed to houses, trees, pictures, and scenery, for we were not leaving any friends, as the mathematicians follow us in a few days. And how many things we get attached to in turn! I put away Keller's map of Switzerland with quite a pang, and now it was just the same again at taking leave of the *Guida di Firenze.*

Having made this reflection I go on, *i.e.* on the road to Incisa, in the most beautiful weather. At Incisa we dined, and I intended to write to you, but the 'situation of the old hole' was so beautiful that we thought we had better take a walk until our *pranzo* was ready. Once for all I beg pardon of Paul and his wife for our Italian words and phrases, which I really do not use from affectation. You know yourselves how in the course of a week one falls into the language and expressions of the people round one, and Italian is so comfortable, and at the same time a bit scurrilous and Jewish. *Poverino* is decidedly *nebbich.* *A propos* of Jews, at Incisa we washed our hands in the very room where Pius VII. had his feet kissed when on his way to France. The whole day's journey was very fine, always rising—*sempre salita*—and on the hills were many German oaks. We spent the night in a solitary house very high up, where again I had to swallow my wrath, for another stage would have brought us to Arezzo, which is a bishopric, but it was too dark for our *vetturino.* He is, however, a *galantuomo*, and the inn was much better than the one at Treuenbriezen. Early this morning

we started in wind, rain, and a thunder-storm. (The horses are being put to, so more to-morrow.)

Perugia: October 27.

If we only had fine weather, this would be one of the most interesting parts of our journey, but unfortunately it is raining incessantly, and so cold that Berlin in November is nothing to it. Yesterday afternoon it cleared up once more, and on the lake of Trasimene we had some fine effects of light and shade, which make all the difference among the Apennines. We passed the night at Passignano, close to the lake, and the rippling of the water and the fresh fish reminded me vividly of Switzerland. It was a warm and lovely evening, with a white cloud, out of which flashed summer lightning, and a clear sky covered with stars, and the moon in her first quarter. By seven this morning we were in our carriage, with oxen in front of the horses, and drove first along the shore of the lake, then among the hills. It is a wild romantic country, with many ruins of towns and old castles, and the *vetturino* explained to me that in Hannibal's times all the towers had been furnished with *cannon*. We arrived here about noon, and walked about in the rain looking at churches and pictures, though unfortunately it was very dark. In the Cambio the ceiling of the hall is adorned with the planets by Raphael, intertwined with elegant arabesques, which looks rather more tasteful than the arrangement in your bedroom.[1] Above the hall is a little chapel with paintings done entirely by Perugino's pupils, and wood-carvings after designs by Raphael and Perugino, all so small and pretty and in such exquisite taste! It is a pity that we have this constant rain, for Perugia is such a delightful, smoky old nook, just the place for scrambling about into every corner, and its situation on the top of a sloping hill, from whence you see the country like a map, is so striking. Dirichlet would not rest till he had made us climb up to one of the highest points and survey the *vista* from under our umbrellas: it must be charming on a clear day. In a private house here is an exquisite Madonna by Raphael, quite something

[1] Fanny had had all these engravings put into one frame, and was continually teased about them.

to fall in love with. I pass over churches and antiquities, the cathedral amongst others, and arrive at home at five, tired out, wet, and hungry. As you may imagine, we enjoyed our dinner. This mixture of pleasure and discomfort agrees with me very well indeed. The inn here is like an old palace, and our rooms something like the Countess Amy's in Walter Scott. The shutters and doors are covered with little landscapes painted in oil, which seems to me a new and pretty idea, worthy of imitation. The walls, curtains, and chairs of our bedroom are of red and white damask, and we have tables of inlaid marble, mirrors in great ormolu frames, etc., all without a 'but,' for everything is fresh, clean, and well kept. In the *salon* are frescoes, they say by Caracci, but good at any rate. The children and Minna also sleep in red damask. For all this splendour they asked twenty paoli; I offered ten, and we agreed for twelve. *Si parla, si fa conoscenza.* And now it is time to go to bed. Alas, it is still pouring! I am afraid we shall have to give up Assisi to-morrow. Minna confessed to me to-day that several times in Florence, instead of taking Ernst for a walk, she went with him to the Uffizii, which pleasure I wish somebody else could have enjoyed.

Terni: 29th.

You are looking out for the waterfall, but you will not get it till to-morrow morning. Terni surprised me much, for I was expecting a small place, half in ruins, like most on this route, and, lo and behold! here is a cheerful, pleasant little town, beautifully situated in a wide, well-cultivated valley, hemmed in by the most romantic mountains. We have just promised the *cameriere* to come again in spring for a *villeggiatura*. But where have we not made that promise? I could not write yesterday, for we did not give up Assisi, but on the contrary ran about there till we were quite tired out, and saw a beautiful old church, painted in the queerest manner from end to end. It is an ultra-catholic town, on a rock, and all the houses and gates are painted; but actually in one of the pretty chapels we found a cobbler's stall. Goethe has described it, so I need not take the trouble; moreover, I do not remember the

Temple of Minerva he writes so much about. The vestibule with the stairs leading down from both sides, like the one in 'Antigone,' impressed me most, although they are not *antichissime*, but a restoration. In a place that was once a school there are six charming little antique pillars, also remains of a temple. We are beginning to feel the influence of Rome, for we come in all directions upon remains of amphitheatres, arches, aqueducts, churches built on the ruins of temples, and cottages containing fragments of former magnificence. It is quite strange to feel that we are so near Rome, and might be dining on Wednesday with the Pope! I have not much to report this time. The day before yesterday we left Perugia directly after sunrise, with regrets at not being able to stay longer, and came first to Maria degli Angeli. Ernst said, 'That is a new-fashioned church: are we to go in there too?' He was quite right, for a prodigious picture by '*Overbekke*' was not worth the trouble. From thence we drove on in the sweet fresh autumn air, with oxen *di rinforzo*, up the steep road winding round the hill to Assisi, the bells ringing all the while in different keys. I should be in a constant state of emotion if certain things did not make me laugh till I cry, such for instance as the men who shake a box in front of you begging alms for the poor souls in purgatory, and the beggars with their cloaks made of a thousand rags patched together, but worn with as great an air as if they were the imperial purple. These characteristics of Italy, familiar as one is with them in pictures, never fail to produce their own effect, serious or comic. On our arrival we went to San Francisco, where there are two large churches, one above the other, the lower one being especially interesting and mysterious, so ancient and so dismal. We heard mass there, and at first the sound, reverberating in the immense vault, struck me as very impressive, but I soon wearied of the monotonous gabble. Then we went to the little chapel dedicated to Sta. Catherina, also painted all over, with two charming little angels above the door. The cathedral was built before the invention of architecture. The other churches we left, and ascended the fortifications to see what Jakoby calls the geography, passing along bad roads and through seas of mud, an article very plentiful in

Assisi. They do not seem to think much of the Pope, any more than our *vetturino* does, and altogether they speak very openly about the government. They know nothing about Bologna except that regiment after regiment has been sent there, and that more troops are waiting to start at Foligno. 'I suppose you know all about it, *fuori*,' says the *cameriere*. Dirichlet gets a lesson in Italian from every *cameriere*. Walter makes good progress by talking with the different coachmen, for he always sits on the box. I made him very happy in Assisi by purchasing a Madonna painted on a gold ground for five paoli. If I had not made up my mind not to buy any pictures for fear of being laughed at, I might have had a whole gallery there for a few scudi. I was so fatigued with all we had done last night at Foligno, and this morning at Spoleto, that I gave up the aqueducts and ruins, and lay down on the sofa—as it happens, there was none at Foligno—while Dirichlet and Walter went out. This morning at Spoleto, however, I inspected while they were gone something that was by no means antique, such a lovely Roman girl of twelve, and to-night I saw some more beautiful specimens on the promenade of Terni. But we have to get there first, through a narrow rocky valley, abounding in woods of ilexes, and paths leading into the many side valleys, with below the rocky bed of a dried-up river—a sight which always makes me thirsty; but the trees do not seem to feel it, for everything is fresh and green, with here and there a few autumnal tints which only make it prettier. To-morrow morning we are going to the waterfall. From time immemorial the postmaster here has held the privilege from the Pope of driving strangers there, so he charges of course highly for his conveyances.

Sette Vene, a solitary house in the Campagna: October 31.

You see, being endowed with more patience than you, we are stopping here at the gates of Rome, though it is only six o'clock, half an hour after the Ave Maria. We celebrated Paul's birthday most brilliantly, in the morning at the waterfall of Terni, in the evening under the solitary arch left of the Roman bridge across the Nera at Narni. For the last five days the weather has been so warm as to surprise even the natives. If

we have a few more such days in Rome, with a full moon, and keep well into the bargain, how delightful it will be! I believe we have passed the dreaded *ce n'est que cela*, for this road is leading us *pian piano* to the remotest antiquity, and we are greedy after every old stone. The drive to the waterfall was a great success, but our pleasure was rather spoiled by the crowds of beggars, worse than any I have yet seen in Italy, although we have passed through a large part of the States of the Church. One good thing is, that one need not pity them as one does at home, where one's whole day is spoilt if one has sent a beggar away. They do not suffer from cold, and need not suffer from hunger, if they would but use their hands: the soil only asks for a little cultivation to make it yield nourishment for more than all the inhabitants. It is a saddening sight to turn from the ruins and behold large tracts of fertile ground lying waste on the one hand, and on the other a number of strong men, well able to work, lying about and picking up their lazy living from the ruins left by their forefathers. To-day at Civita Castellana we saw descendants of the old Roman soldiers strolling about in slippers. We went to the fortress in the afternoon, and the commandant was most polite, picked me some flowers from his garden, and kindly showed us over the tower, in which more than a hundred prisoners are kept, all for political offences. Many are in for life, and it made me feel quite ill, but I can do nothing to change things for the better, so we must be content with seeing what the ancients did, and what Providence still does for this land of wonders. Our cicerone yesterday told us that *Curio Dentato*, *papa antico*, diverted the waterfall. It is an interesting fact that this waterfall, one of the finest, should be the work of man. I am going out to have a little more of the Campagna by moonlight. To-morrow, Roma!

Rome: November 2.

We are actually here! What will not carriages and horses accomplish! I could scarcely believe that we should really see Rome, till yesterday at half past eleven, when Dirichlet asked the *vetturino* what gateway it was that we saw before us, and he replied, 'Non è porta, è ponte Molle.' It was so strange. Before

that I had recognised the Castello di S. Angelo in the distance; and as the city lay before us with its many cupolas, we learned persons disputed which from its situation could be St. Peter's, till at last the real St. Peter's appeared from behind the hill, and settled the question. We made our entrance at noon, on November 1, All Saints' Day, and watched as we waited at the gate the well-dressed crowd coming out of S. Maria del Popolo; three paoli supplied the deficiency of a *lascia passare*, which we had omitted to procure at Florence, and we drove to the French hotel Santa Maria sopra Minerva, where we have fine apartments, with a little dirt thrown in. Cornelius is here too, next door to us. The first hour in this metropolis of the world passed as first hours after an arrival always do, in washing, changing our clothes—a thing we needed very much indeed—and eating, of which we also stood in great need: then I rested on my laurels (which I might have done in a literal sense, as I had brought a bunch from Terni), whilst Dirichlet and Walter went to see Kaselowsky; but they soon returned with him and Horkel, and we went in a body to look for lodgings. *En passant* we stepped into the Pantheon, where we got a bit of absolution, then walked up the Monte Pincio, past Casa Bartholdy, to the French Academy, had a peep through the ilexes, took a carriage on the Piazza di Spagna, and drove home to dinner. In the evening we had visits from Moser, Kaselowsky, Horkel, and old Geheimrath Link, so the first day in Rome passed very pleasantly. At nine Dirichlet went out with Horkel, to see ancient Rome by moonlight, and came home quite enthusiastic. I did not accompany him, but tumbled into bed and was soon sound asleep. This morning we went out again with Kaselowsky to look for lodgings, and were much tempted to take the third story of the Casa Bartholdy, for which we offered as much as sixty scudi a month, so you will perceive that it was not niggardliness that prevented our getting them, but it is the same old story, no one will let for less than six months, and we cannot tie ourselves down for so long, or we should have to give up Venice. Oh, what a view there is up there! but I will look neither at ruins nor men, dwarfs nor giants, till we have settled down.

The 4th.—Thank goodness, we have got lodgings, at 45 Via Capo le Case, on the third floor, but sunny and airy, with a balcony outside the *salotto*, and in a respectable and, as far as Roman notions go, comfortable house. Health and happiness to you and yours in the coming year. Next year my congratulations will not, I hope, have to travel so far. *Mezzogiorno* is still ringing in my ears, and a word of very indefinite meaning it is with Roman landlords; but our rooms are really *mezzogiorno*.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: October 31, 1843.

Welcome to Rome, at the post-office in the Piazza Colonna, where you will probably receive this letter. As I see that your memory, which impartially retains all impressions, whether pleasant or the reverse, has been faithful with regard to our tour, there will be no lack of opportunities for thinking of us. I hope Rome will agree with you—that you will like it I have no doubt. Give my love to the Alban Hills, with the little white houses, looking like children's toys, and the yellow streak, which will interest Walter because it is said to have been there that Hannibal stood. Every time you come upon it unexpectedly it will rejoice your heart. Ah, how glad I am that you are seeing all those wonderful, striking, never-to-be-forgotten sights!

Politics are still in a most unsettled state. Hanover is thinking of entering into a preliminary treaty with the Zollverein, which is considered very important. But in spite of obstacles, the spirit of the nation makes constant progress. That cannot be denied. Ah! what do you care about the Zollverein or the spirit of the nation? You are walking on the Pincio, counting the windows in the Vatican, and you do not care a fig for the rest of the world. Is not the southern *insouciance* contagious to a degree? Christ took into consideration the country He was in when He told the people not to toil more than the lilies of the field or the young ravens. If people were to act literally upon this here, they would starve, and when a Berlin preacher, *tale quale*, enforces the principle on his congregation,

I do not know whether to laugh or to be vexed at his absurdity. Lately I have been listening to several of the preachers, with a view to choosing for Sebastian, but, as I had some objection to each the moment I heard him, I began to fear that if I went the round of all I should not be able to send my boy to any one of them. As, however, my husband left the matter entirely in my hands, I ended by fixing upon the clergyman who teaches at the Gymnasium, Pastor Eyssenhart, a simple, kind, earnest man, without a trace of affectation, who pleases me much. Sebastian has had two lessons from him already. 'Time is, time was.'

After an interruption of eighteen months I have had my first musical *matinée*, with Felix's new violoncello sonata (in which Ganz did not fail to make one huge blunder), my piece from Faust, Felix's alto solo and chorus, etc. It was a great effort to begin again, though it is only for two or three times, as I shall have none in December; but Hensel wished it. Oh, Dirichlet, how I do miss Borchardt's tenor! You have no idea of the state of dearth we are in now. I cannot even use my fine bass, on account of the balance of the parts. Three little piping birds are all I can find; 'but one halfpennyworth of bread to this intolerable deal of sack.' *Ad vocem* Shakespeare, I wish you could hear a specimen now and then of the opinions about the 'Midsummer-night's Dream.' We had a regular chorus of astonishment over it yesterday at the Steffens'. With the innumerable editions of the innumerable translations printed and sold every year, one would never believe how many people there are who do not know the play at all. And yet it is constantly being performed, and then there is not a seat to be had for love or money. Magnus overheard, the other day, a lively dispute at a restaurant, among a lot of young fashionables, as to whether Shakespeare or Tieck had written the play. One, I think, maintained that Shakespeare had translated it into English. The vulgarity of the clowns, and the ass's head, are very trying, too, to elegant people, and they express their indignation loudly, in spite of the ermine mantle which royalty has spread over the piece of folly. The first remark Felix heard about it was at supper in the new palace, when a starred but not very enlightened gentleman said to him, 'What a pity that

you have wasted your beautiful music on such a stupid play!' To-day my husband is invited to Potsdam, where he is to exhibit his portrait of the Prince of Wales. The weather is most favourable for this ceremonious but honourable expedition.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: November 15, 1843.

Our house is pretty full now that Pourtales has arrived with his princely household of nineteen persons. How amused mother would have been at the list—it is quite a study. The name of the adopted daughter is Aminka Züllich von Zühlborn. One of our new inmates gave occasion to a fine *quiproquo* the other day. Heinrich came to Hensel and said that a gentleman was below who could not speak German, but wanted to see his master. Accordingly, in came an elegant young man, saying, 'Monsieur, j'ai été chez monsieur le prévôt de l'église, et il m'a dit que vous voudriez bien me confesser.' You must know that the chaplain of the countess has taken up his abode in the room over the studio. Did not the poor man chance upon a veritable Friar Tuck? We scolded Hensel very much for not receiving the confession, for as he is bound by no vows he might have told us all the secrets afterwards. Yesterday evening he proposed a toast in character with his new dignity.

Do write whether the Dutch painter T. is living or did live at your house in the Capo le Case. You will know him by his being such a bore; indeed, I believe he invented the science, and has taken out a patent for life. If it is that house, as I think it must be, we know it, and that would be very nice. Tell us everything, from the fleas to the lords and the beggars on two legs or three. I cannot repeat too often that everything interests us. Do not forget to visit the *bosco* at the French Academy, the garden up the steps, and make Kaselowsky show you all the places where I had fits of enthusiasm, and then sing a second to me. One could wax enthusiastic in Rome, even if Mephistopheles were sitting on one's shoulders. My second *matinée* went off so badly that, if the third and last before Christmas does not make up for it, I shall think twice before

recommencing them. Does Minna cook for you? Housekeeping in Rome is an invention of mine.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Rome: November 10.

. . . The first days of this week were occupied, of course, with domestic arrangements, lessons from the cook, milkman, baker, etc. At Florence our landlady provided everything. But we have already taken some beautiful walks by moonlight, one to the Coliseum and back by the Capitol, and another to Monte Cavallo. It all strikes me so much that I cannot understand the *ce n'est que cela* feeling, unless it be at St. Peter's, where one has to learn the figures first, and then step it before one can realise its enormous size. But oh, Fanny, that old Nicolai rises up in me again here, and I have much ado to overcome it. The day before yesterday I went to see the Veits,[1] in a pair of white linen shoes, which were in a nice state when I emerged from that beautiful street. At Berlin, however, I should not have thought of putting on white shoes on November 8. Rome was certainly better in the olden days than now, for that passage to the Veits must be a step backwards in civilisation from the *Cloaca maxima*, which I have not yet seen. But seriously, does not Rome as it is revolt you when you look at Rome as it was? Say yes. What a loyal Prussian I shall become if I stay long under the Pope! That our king has one merit cannot be denied: he has brought Felix on the stage. Dirichlet reads Boccaccio the whole day long, and I, when I have any time, take up Goethe. You have much more reason to be afraid of Dirichlet's Italian than of mine; he studies it with his usual perseverance, and, as Jakoby says, flogs his teachers till he makes them teach him something, and every person he meets he considers a teacher.

Good-bye, dear Fanny. My love to husband, child, brother, and sister, house, cocks and hens, and Caro [the dog]. Also to all the Mendelssohns in the Jägerstrasse, even if they call themselves Oppenheim or Warschauer, and live in the Behrenstrasse.

[1] Philipp Veit, Dorothea Mendelssohn's son by her first marriage.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: November 24, 1843.

Do gladden the hearts of Dirichlet and Jakoby by telling them the reason why the students have not serenaded Böckh on his birthday to-day. This time they had intended to have a torchlight procession in his honour, and great festivities altogether. They had already obtained the gracious permission of the police, when the president of police asked to see the list of everybody who was to take part in it, and struck out the names of ten students, whereupon the others at once gave up the whole thing, and now only mean to send a deputation with their congratulations, and give him an account of the proceedings.

We are well acquainted with that passage at the Veits'. Did you find your way up there at once? I turned back just before reaching the door, as I felt convinced that no human being could be living higher up, and that we should find ourselves on the roof if we went a step further. I still know my way about Rome splendidly, better than I do in Berlin. I wonder why it amuses one so to read in a letter from Rome—'Papetto, via del Babuino'—the mere names?

The other day we met at a grand *soirée* at Pertz's the new conservative Professor Huber, whose *début* has been so disastrous, for not a soul came to even his third lecture, and three different addresses have been presented by the University protesting against his appointment—*vide* Böckh. Have I told you what an absurd newspaper, the *Barmen and Wupperthal Gazette*, we are taking to please Böckh, who felt an irresistible longing to see it? Twenty people have asked me already where Barmen is—a question which surprised me as much as the incognito which the 'Midsummer-night's Dream' has hitherto preserved.

Rebecca to Fanny.

December 15, 1843.

I found your letter on our return from visiting several studios; and having put it in my pocket unread, we muffled up the children, got into a carriage, and drove to the Lateran,

where we did not forget to look at the beautiful cloisters, and then on to the Villa Wolchonsky, of Hensel memory. I fully indorse all you have said about it, and sing the enthusiastic second you begged me to. There, on classic soil, sitting with Dirichlet on the pedestal of the bust of Alexander, while Kaselowsky and the children, who stick to him like burrs, took their places on the little antique bench at the side, I read aloud such parts of your letter as I considered suitable to the audience. How absurd and how stupid are those intrigues of the police! Dear me, who gives a thought to liberty here? Instead of it there is perfect absence of constraint, but how far it goes and of what nature it is I need not explain to you. And what more does one want than to be allowed to walk about under the blue sky, in the warm sunshine? Pray do not take this seriously. I hope Hensel will not be angry with us for taking up so much of Kaselowsky's time. I believe it will do him all the good in the world to be in the open air this beautiful weather; and a walk in the country, or an extra visit to the violin-player or the Titians, cannot be waste of time for an artist. We are now quite Roman, being on visiting terms with three Abbates, and the *padrone* of the house has a great respect for us. We got a *permesso* for the Villa Ludovisi from the owner's younger brother, Principe Buoncompagni, who devotes himself to mathematics. Poor younger son! his income is only 70,000 scudi; but he came here yesterday on foot, with a parcel of books tied up in a pocket-handkerchief. The whole family are noted for their stinginess.

Landsberg's *soirées* have begun; and we had the overture to the 'Flauto Magico' performed by four ladies, of whom Mme. Vanutelli was one; a sonata for two pianos by Franck and Mme. Nerenz, and Pergolesi's 'Salve Regina,' sung by Signora Sciabatta, who has a splendid contralto. Her brother, whom I have often heard you mention, is now enchanting St. Petersburg by his good looks and his voice. The best item came after most of the people had left, Beethoven's Sonata in C minor, played by Franck and Eckert in a very different style to what the amateurs could do, were twenty-four of them all to try at once!

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: December 5, 1843.

'Jakoby's arrival in Rome is announced in to-day's paper, and I hear from private sources as much of Steiner, so I am not uneasy about your progress in mathematics. You will also like to know how we are getting on here, and so much has happened that I am in danger of forgetting if I do not write down the events of each day. We have had three musical parties at Paul's, and on Wednesday the first subscription-concert took place under Felix's direction,[1] with the very beautiful symphony in A major. The room was crowded almost to suffocation, and one ran the risk of squeezing somebody one knew to death at every turn. The whole affair is very amusing. On Thursday evening we had a grand serenade, Wieprecht with his choral society and a military band. As the weather was very bad, I had the garden-hall lit up, and the whole thing looked very pretty. Felix would have known nothing about it till the last moment, if Woringen could have kept the secret, but he let it out in the morning. Yesterday I had the last Sunday-music, which was very successful. Mme. Decker sang again for the first time, and so exquisitely. I played Beethoven's trio in E flat, and, with Felix, Beethoven's polonaise and the interludes from the 'Midsummer-night's Dream,' with great applause. Felix is in very good spirits so far, and very amiable. In addition to all the music I have mentioned, he has had to swallow no end of concerts, rehearsals, theatres, and all sorts of things. To-morrow is the 'Midsummer-night's Dream,' on Wednesday the second concert; and so we pass our days. I am very glad that the Woringens are so lucky, and Ferdinand is in such a state of bliss that he is by no means anxious to go back to Liegnitz. Yesterday we all went to a little dinner given by Webern,[2] where some bottles of champagne, a clumsy servant (who inspired me with great respect for our Heinrich), and the high spirits of the men kept us laughing incessantly.

[1] Mendelssohn had arrived at Berlin on November 11.

[2] General Webern, the well-known veteran of the war of 1813–15.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: December 11, 1843.[1]

I must have some conversation with you before the close of this day, on which I am sure your thoughts have been with us. Your dear letter, which I received this morning, made me very happy. Mother would have had a whole year of happiness if she had been spared to us, especially as Felix is living here. Now that the year is nearly over, we all assembled the other day in the drawing-room, which however is so much altered that you would scarcely know it. Felix is as amiable, in as good spirits, and as delightful as you know he can be in his best days. I admire him afresh every day, for this quiet life together is new to me, and his mind is so many-sided, and so unique and interesting in every respect, that one never gets accustomed to him. I do believe that he gets more lovable, too, as he increases in years, which reminds me that A. paid me the compliment yesterday of saying that I had quite grown amiable in my old age. If I add that a stranger the other day at a party spoke to me as the wife of Minister Savigny, you will agree with me, O Dirichlet, that I am now really venerable.

December 12.—I have just returned from the cemetery, where I visited our graves and found them in good order. The trees are growing and thriving. The weather is lovely, just like what it was about this time last year, mild, fresh, and invigorating, with a slight frost, and all the trees covered with rime. The walk was quite refreshing.

Felix to Rebecca.

Berlin: December 23, 1843.

To-day is the eve of Christmas-eve, and I will spend it in talking to you, my dear little sister. Our purchases are made, and the arrangements completed. The pair of little pictures which I have been too busy to finish cannot be touched by candle-light, so this is the time for a chat. If I could only have one with you in reality! Christmas-eve is to be kept at *our* home. The candles aré just being put into the chandeliers

[1] December 12, 1842, was the date of the mother's death.

in the blue room, where the Christmas-tree is to stand to morrow. The double window is now in the middle, and I am going to give Cécile to-morrow sixteen plants, big and little, to stand in it. My other presents will be—for her, a black satin dress, a bonnet, a few trifles, and one of my well-known much too green landscapes, on pressed carton-paper; for Paul, a landscape from Sachse (the picture-dealer), which he has a special longing for; for Fanny, a table-cover for the blue room; for Hensel, an immense ham and some claret; for Sebastian, a study-lamp; for the children, a set of small furniture (they have been wishing for furniture), etc. Well, now, I should like to know how this list sounds in the neighbourhood of the Ara Cœli. On Christmas-day I have for the first time to conduct the music in the cathedral with orchestra; there is to be a new psalm of mine, 'To our salvation,' from Handel's 'Messiah,' a couple more new trifles of mine, and some chorales with trombones. On New Year's day it will be much the same, with a slight variation of colour, another new psalm of mine, the Hallelujah Chorus from the 'Messiah,' and some more chorales with trombones. I must say between ourselves that so far I do not expect much from it, but do not tell anybody!

We are leading a very quiet life, for my horror of aristocratic acquaintances has if possible increased since we came, and you would laugh to see me plunging about in the effort to escape the nets of the English ambassador. He has hooked me for one dinner though, but he will not do it twice, that I vow. Why, excepting their excellencies and a few barons, you know yourself how few people I know whom one could invite and visit in return, so we stay at home in our own family circle, and that is much the best. Rellstab declares that the concerts of the royal chapel, three of which have taken place already, are nearly as good as those of the Paris Conservatoire, but it is not so, and unless they improve very much they will never be worth anything. I am now in correspondence with the London Philharmonic Society, who want to engage me as their permanent conductor for next season. I feel much inclined to accept, as the society is (speaking artistically) so very aristocratic, but I do not yet know whether it will be possible, especially on account of Cécile

and the children, for they could not well spend three months in England, and to be separated from them for three months would be still worse. This also we must keep to ourselves—it is a great secret as yet, and the *Morning Herald* hears every word you say in Rome, even in your sleep; so you had better not talk about it at all. I hope you notice that I am trying to put this letter into a different shape, as you made such fun of the last one. I am delighted to hear that Italy agrees so well with you, and praise both it and you for your good behaviour. When I think that the Pifferari are now droning away, that the Ara Cœli will be all astir to-morrow, that the flowers are blooming in the Villa Pamfili, and that you are within a short walk of it all—I feel ready to give up at once the Christmas-fair in the Breitenstrasse and all the Christmas rattles, and come straight off to Rome, if only it were possible. I say to you as Klingemann did to me before my first journey to England: 'Have your fill once more of dumplings and pears, for you will never get them there!' By the 'dumplings and pears' I mean of course the Vatican and Tasso's oak; and specially San Onofrio! and specially S. Maria Maggiore to-morrow! When I reflect that the day before yesterday was the shortest day, and that I may possibly go to England, and possibly earn a great deal of money there, and possibly undergo such extraordinary exertions that I shall need an extraordinary holiday afterwards, I feel as if I should like to go to Switzerland for a bit after the musical festival at Zweibrücken on August 1. There would still be six or eight weeks of capital weather for Switzerland! Perhaps we might meet on the Grimsel or on the Diablerets, or somewhere else where there is fine scenery? Are these castles in the air?

Rebecca to Fanny.

(With a vignette of the Christmas-tree by Kaselowsky.)

Rome: December 27.

Felicissima festa to all of you! and hearty thanks to you especially, dear Fanny, for your two delightful letters, which put me quite in tune for the festivities. My laurel has been

dreaming of your fir-tree; here is the representation of it, and now for the explanatory remarks. The tree is a laurel which touches the ceiling of our room, and is adorned with roses, enormous grapes, oranges, and the well-known Roman candied fruit; round the base is a garland of laurel, apples, and nuts, and above that the presents. These are—a likeness of little Ernst, drawn for me by Kaselowsky, a vase of *Giallo antico* to hold cigar-ash for Dirichlet, and a pile of cigars which cost Kaselowsky and me infinite trouble to build up, as they would fall down again; the temple of Vesta as an ink-stand, and the three celebrated columns in bronze, a paint-box filled with real paints and imitations in sugar, for Kaselowsky, and the Florentine boar as a letter-weight. Besides these more important articles there were a few little vases of *rosso*, *giallo*, and all sorts of antique colours, filled with blotting-sand, sugar-plums, and all manner of absurdities, and the whole thing was splendidly illuminated. Our court, as you choose to call it, consisted of Jakoby, Steiner, Borchardt, Moser, Kaselowsky, Geyer, and Julius Elsasser,[1] so now you have our Christmas party. The tree was really a masterpiece. Later we had lobster-salad, sandwiches, cake, and punch; but how we missed Hensel's verses! Your health was duly proposed in prose, and I made a speech full of feeling, proposing, in order to drive away the emotion all were likely to feel at the thought of friends at home, the health of the future wives of the bachelors present, which soon restored the *allegria*. The day before yesterday I was presented with a beautiful sepia-drawing by August Elsasser, whom I have not seen yet; the poor fellow cannot even leave his room, and we are not allowed to visit him till he has finished his picture, which he seems to be painting with his life-blood.

According to what they say, there can be very little hope for him—but we must hope for a miracle! Since Kaselowsky's recovery, everything seems possible. We have not been sight-seeing much of late, but we were (*pauvres hommes*) at the Villa Ludovisi. That mean Piombino only gave us a *permesso*

[1] Two painters. Elsasser, the younger brother of the well-known landscape-painter.

for six persons, but we took eight. I think these villas are very like Walter Scott's novels, for one always thinks the last the finest; each has its special attractions, and shows Rome from quite a new side, so that there is constant food for astonishment and admiration. Here Dirichlet dragged me out again for a walk: it was so lovely, not a cloud in the sky. Before I had been letting the sun shine on my back through the open window, and then I turned round and warmed my hands and feet on the iron railings. I have invented a special attitude for that purpose.

The joint housekeeping of Kaselowsky, Moser, and Geyer in their studio is very funny, but also very tidy, which is chiefly due to Kaselowsky, as he insists upon everything being kept in its place, and, on each putting his own works together, on having a general cleaning up, etc. Walter is most happy among them, and they are well satisfied with his talent and progress. If it were not so very difficult to be an artist—a real artist, I mean—it looks a very pleasant life from the outside. But it is dreadful how many Philistines are to be found even here, in classical, poetic Rome. There are indeed more such petrified souls here than anywhere, but I have been taking care to avoid them. I feel so happy in the early morning when I look out of bed and see the chimneys in the rosy light, and I want to have no disturbing element in the delightful time. Last week Alerz took Dirichlet and Jakoby to Lady (*sic*) Somerville's; they both came home in a very excited state, for the celebrated bluestocking had never heard of Jakoby, but knew something of his brother,[1] who had sent her a medal gilded by his galvanoplastic process, so she talked of nothing but 'monsieur votre frère,' which grievously wounded his vanity; but his wrath made him most witty and amusing, and he kept us laughing the whole evening. On Friday morning Dirichlet and Jakoby are to have coffee with the Pope.

[1] The inventor of *galvanoplastique*.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: December 26, 1843.

. . . We were all rather quiet on Christmas-eve, none of us feeling really merry, I think, but each anxious not to betray himself to the others. Felix, however, amused me immensely in the afternoon. He was composing cathedral-music in his study whilst I was arranging the presents with Cécile, but again and again he came out and helped us, played with the dogs and horses, and then ran back to his chords with renewed zeal and earnestness. This went on for about an hour. I have thought of quite a new arrangement. If God spare us to another Christmas and grant us to be all together, why should we not have a picnic in the garden-hall? The weather is generally mild about Christmas-time, and the room is easily heated, as I found out the other day, when Felix had a rehearsal there. The weather keeps mild and damp, and I am sure that I am not exaggerating when I say that we have not seen the sun above twice in eight weeks.

You want to know who Mme. O. is? Mr. O. is an ugly wine-merchant from Bordeaux, and Mme. O., who is a very pretty woman, sings French romances and ordinary Italian airs very nicely, and is an accomplished flirt, *un peu dans le genre de Mme. W.*, but prettier and more coquettish, with a touch of childlike innocence. She is turning the heads of the aristocracy in quite an amusing way. The husband disposes of his wines, while the wife is executing sentimental melodies with an obligato accompaniment in which eyes, hands, and a snowy neck play their parts to perfection.

To-day is the rehearsal in the cathedral of the ninety-eighth psalm, which Felix has composed for New Year's day. The age of signs and miracles is not wholly gone by, and the good results of the king's endeavours to promote a religious tendency are evident to all, for on this day may be seen the spectacle of me hiring a seat of the sacristan, provided I can get one. As a rule I do not hear these performances of Felix's, for on high festivals the cathedral is so crowded that one has no chance of a seat, and standing for hours together among the crowd would

be rather too great a trial of faith for me. I assure you it is as good as a play to hear Felix talk of his dealings with the cathedral clergy, of his intimate friendship with Count Redern, the mutual affection between him and Herr von Witzleben, and a thousand such stories. We often scarcely know how to stop laughing. You can never disconcert him either; the other day, at a *soirée monstre* given by the English ambassador, he conducted the latter's ridiculously childish symphony with an almost imperceptible smile of sarcasm on his lip, but with the utmost politeness. He was not in the least put out, but only laughed, though I was so vexed at seeing him conducting such stupid stuff that I felt inclined to cry. It was the same the other day at a large party at Herr von Massow's, where he accompanied Mme. O. in 'Grâce, grâce,' besides an interminable Italian duet and other trash, and then played his own trio, with some officers talking loudly the whole time, and even after that he did not snap at us the next day. As I said before, the age of miracles is not yet gone by. Meanwhile the rehearsal in the cathedral has already taken place, and the psalm is very beautiful; it begins *a capella* with a deep bass solo, then the instruments come in gradually in the following order—harp, trombones, trumpets, till at the roaring of the sea the whole orchestra rushes in—and a magnificent rush it is.

I must tell you about the uncommonly stupid *fête* the Devrients gave the other day. The entertainment was to be some scenes from 'Bluebeard,' and Werder was to act Simon, but he was unexpectedly summoned to Stettin the day before, and Devrient, who had to take his part, only got back from the theatre at ten. By that time the company, who had been invited for eight o'clock precisely, and had had nothing to do but to sit staring at one another, were quite tired out. The scenes selected were all tragic and horrible, without any relief, and the performers were very poor, except Marie, who showed extraordinary talent, Devrient, who took Simon, and Taubert, who made a capital old witch. There was no stage, but only a curtain; and you have no idea how absurd it was to see so much despair, dishevelled hair, fainting away, and general apparatus of woe, right in one's lap as it were. I believe that they have just

decided that Marie is to go on the stage. The audience, too, was a set of prosy Geheimraths from the Thiergarten. The most interesting point in the whole evening was beyond a doubt A.'s toilette: she wore a Paraphrase (it is no longer called a Potpourri) of black silk trimmed with the fur of tortoise-shell cats, open sleeves, showing her bony arms, and black-velvet bracelets; her hair was arranged like a lunatic's, and the whole thing was evidently intended to be artistic, but only succeeded in being so hideous that I really could not take my eyes off her. This *soirée* put Felix into a rage, which lasted for three days; however, as I wrote before, I have never seen him more amiable than he is this winter, although he has had now and then a good deal to try him. He never gives way to temper now as he used to do, and, if he remains like this, we cannot be thankful enough for having him here. So far he has played in public twice; once at Molique's concert (he has often played with us lately), when he played Beethoven's sonata in A minor, and again at the subscription-concert, where he took his own concerto in G minor, being applauded both times in a manner quite exceptional for Berlin. But people are beginning to understand that the symphonies go in quite a different way to what they did, and in course of time the audience will make as much progress as the orchestra. Felix's second psalm for the cathedral choir, *a capella*, in eight parts, is so beautiful, very Gregorian, and reminding one of the Sixtine. I am curious to hear what will be said about it, that is, if people listen at all. Felix would prefer composing with the orchestra, and has got in the thin end of the wedge by introducing Handel's choruses after those *a capella*, just as he introduced, from the first, solo-pieces at the subscription-concerts, in the hope of being able to smuggle part-singing in by-and-by. He sets about it all so cautiously and prudently that I have no doubt he will get his own way in everything. And really the moral influence of a distinguished man tells for so much that something will be done even with the Philistines and blockheads.

So Delaroche has arrived in Rome, and Schnetz wants to leave, and Ingres is growing tired of his position! I cannot understand these people! I am not naturally an envious

person, and have nothing to make me so, being perfectly satisfied with my own position in life, but if there were a situation in the world which I should feel inclined to covet, it would be that of Director of the French Academy. Tell me yourself, O Roman, when you have been to the Palazzo Medici, what would you say to living there with a royal salary, surrounded by the *élite* of the young artists of our own nation (which they ought to be at least), with privileges and liberties such as are generally accorded only to ambassadors! The one drawback, to my mind, is that the post is only tenable for six years, and here are people weary of it before that! The French artists are too well off; they are growing arrogant, and will end like the fisherman and his wife in the fairy-tale.

Rebecca to Fanny.

. . . I have nothing important to say. The only striking event of last week was the visit to the Pope, with whom Dirichlet was quite enchanted. His Holiness talked with them for more than half an hour, all about mathematics and mathematicians, and showed much more knowledge of the subject than Lady (*sic*) Somerville. They believe he prepared himself beforehand. It must have been a sight to see Dirichlet on his knees kissing the Pope's toe, and Jakoby as a heretic kissing his hand.

January 5.—For shame! Yesterday evening it snowed, and all the roofs are white! At least, that is rather an exaggeration, but the snow was really lying in some places this morning. To my great joy I found your and Felix's letters on returning home. You grumble about parties 'dull as leather'! I wish you would come here. An industrious cobbler might find sufficient material for boots and shoes for the whole world out of the parties here. They are almost as 'leathern' as this letter, which will never be finished, I am afraid. Since we have been confined by the cold weather to our only warm room, I can never find a quiet moment for writing, as the children, the mathematician, and visitors interrupt me turn and turn about. For the artists here—

> The century rends itself in storm away,
> And, red with slaughter, dawns on earth the new.

They are all in a state of perfect fury about Catel, about Senff, about the Princess, and her commissions or non-commissions, etc. I cannot get up much interest in the question, but one thing is clear—a Prussian academy must be founded. No other nation goes wandering about here like stray sheep as the Prussians do. At any rate, our ambassador ought to have sufficient knowledge of art not to allow such mistakes as the Princess is making in her artistic efforts. Art is the true politics of Rome. Moreover, I think founding a Prussian academy at Rome would be just the thing for our present king, for it would make almost as much noise in the world as the bishopric at Jerusalem; and if, by making as many mistakes as possible—but why should one fall into the true Berlin style the moment one begins to think of a Prussian institution, even of one which has as yet no existence?

To-morrow is the Babel of languages at the Propaganda, and Dirichlet is going. I shall in the meantime probably go to hear some celebrated Italian preacher. I saw nothing of the church ceremonies at Christmas, for the midnight mass was too late for me, and the other too early; indeed, I was so tired with my Christmas-eve party that I slept the next morning till ten o'clock. Altogether, I candidly confess that the church ceremonies and the churches themselves attract me less than anything in Rome. I am quite sick already of colours and elegances of dress and ceremonial, and the whole of the *roba* of religion; indeed, I could not have believed that I had so much Protestant blood in me. I will guard it, too, by not going to the Protestant church. The other day I had a controversial dispute with an *abbate* about Luther, but he provoked it. This would be another good point to set before the king in favour of an academy, it would be so useful as a safeguard for the young against proselytisers. The sudden conversion of a sculptor, named Hoffmann, is much talked of; three weeks ago he received the Holy Communion in the Protestant Church, and a few days ago he not only turned Roman Catholic but was remarried according to Catholic rites, to his wife, who had gone over some time before. Overbeck gave a dinner, and Aalborn a supper, in honour of the ceremony. Boccaccio's

'Melchisedeck Ebreo' is right enough about the divinity of Christianity.[1]

Yesterday, at Landsberg's, we had the children's toy-symphony, which made the other folks stare, but delighted the Germans. Mme. Nerenz laughed so much at my saying the other day, when Eckert and Frank were playing her the 'Songs without Words,' that I felt quite like their aunt, and it has become a proverb among them all now. We old ones derive great satisfaction from this school of Felix's followers. Frank has formed his playing entirely on Felix's style, and he could not have chosen a better model. We cannot get up a quartet for want of a violoncello. No Italian 'cello can ever get beyond Beethoven's Trio in C minor, so Paul would make his fortune here. This letter has taken one day longer than it took to create the world, for to-day is the seventh day, and lest it should reach to nine, like a child-bed fever, I will say good-bye at once. I have told you that the Villa Wolchonsky sends its love to you, and if I did not say the same of the Villa Mills it is my forgetfulness, for I have been twice charged with the message. Do you know a cypress there, with a rose-tree growing in the middle and flinging its blossoms all over the dark green? It is quite poetic.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: January 9, 1844.

You write to me by an open window, and I answer from behind frosted panes. Such is life! Hensel and I invariably heave a deep sigh over your letters, and yet they give us great pleasure, especially the Christmas one with its charming vignette. I believe we must do Italy together some day, as a *grand ensemble*; first we sang our part, now you are singing yours, and we shall end, I hope, by taking up the theme together. This musical simile suits me, for if you are surrounded by flowers, blue skies, and balmy breezes, we are floating in a crisp atmosphere of music of all sorts, from the lowest to the highest, the fashionable-frivolous to the cathedral-

[1] An allusion to the second story of the first day in the *Decamerone*. The hero, however, is called Abraham, and Melchisedeck is the hero of the third story, on which is founded *Nathan the Wise*.

sacred. The greater part, however, is still to come; but if I give you the names of the artists now with us, Schröder-Devrient, Servais, Moriani, Sciabatta, and Richard Wagner, with his 'Flying Dutchman,' you will be able to form some idea of the time and money I shall have to lay out in sound. Last week we heard Henrietta Sonntag, who still sings exquisitely, but the best of all was to hear Felix's account of how she came to be there, and of all that happened at the rehearsal. The Countess Rossi, tired of hearing all Berlin raving about Mme. O.'s French romances, resolved to step forth from her retirement and favour the Court, if the queen would invite her to do so; but as etiquette interfered to prevent this being managed, Herr von Massow and Count Redern had a race to see who could get up a musical party first, and Herr von Massow won. Their majesties and ourselves having accepted, this amusing *fête* took place last Thursday. Countess Rossi and Mme. O. each sang their solos and then joined in a duet, Felix accompanying Countess Rossi, and afterwards, at the king's request, he extemporised, but was not quite so much in the vein as usual. Countess Rossi still sings with the same grace and finish that distinguished Henrietta Sonntag —indeed it was really charming, and we could not help admiring little Mme. O. for not making an absolute fiasco, a piece of luck to which undoubtedly her pretty face contributed not a little. Servais played the other day at a party at Felix's house. Taking pity on your probable ignorance, I will inform you that Servais is a Belgian, the first living violoncello player, and the first *grimacier* in the world. We had heard much of this talent of his, and it was very droll to see Felix, who was accompanying him, keeping his eyes fixed upon him, except for a casual glance at the music, and studying his grimaces with a kind of amused curiosity. He intends to express the fashionable idea nowadays of being filled with thoughts quite beyond expression, but the effect of all these emotions striving for the mastery on his honest Flemish face is only comical. I am growing day by day more reserved and critical with regard to such music, and, wonderful as Servais's execution may be, I would not get up from my chair to hear him a second time. It is different with Moriani, to whom I am looking forward with much pleasure. A beautiful voice goes

a long way with me, and I shall also be glad to see our Roman friend Sciabatta, who is travelling with him. Felix's psalm for New Year's day, about which I wrote to you, I believe, the other day, is beautiful, and was very well performed; but unfortunately the whole impression was ruined by a sermon from Strauss, which was miserable beyond description. Perfect enjoyment of the cathedral music appears to be out of the question, for though a choir can be found it seems hopeless to look for a priest with any sense. Felix ought to undertake the sermon too; but, after all, that is more than one has a right to expect.

Fanny to Rebecca.

(With a vignette by Hensel representing Dirichlet and Jakoby at the audience, the former kissing the Pope's toe, and the latter his hand. Under the picture is pasted an article from the *Spenersche Zeitung*, ending with the words, 'These two learned men, with whom the Pope conversed at large about the present state of mathematical science in Germany, were not a little astonished to find the head of the Catholic church a man of learning as profound as it is various.' Below are these lines in Hensel's hand:—

Indess ich einen Pantoffel küsse
Hat mein Römerschwager Doppel genüsse;
Wie schmiegt sich der riesige Christoffel
Unter den Frauen- und Papstpantoffel.

So wird er zur Jakobileiter,
Der drauf zur Kirche steigt und weiter,
Wo thront das theologische X;
Das zeigt das Bild, und weiter nix.[1])

I say no more! The sensation produced among the mathematicians and our acquaintances in general by the above

[1] While I one foot alone here kiss,
My friend enjoys a double bliss;
The giant Christopher bends his neck
To papal heel, or woman's beck.

Like Jacob's ladder he ascends
Right through the Church, and so he wends
Up to the X of all theology.
This is the picture's phraseology.

communication in the *Spenersche Zeitung* was immense, and the *hilarité générale*. Even we ourselves were surprised, not having made much of the allusion in your last, as the thing appeared so very improbable. You are indeed having a delightful time, and we thoroughly enjoy following you about and sharing your pleasures, as, fortunately, we know all the chief persons and places. A Prussian academy in Rome? Yes, it would be a fine thing. We had a long talk about the contents of your last letter the day *before* it arrived, and I discovered that Hensel would make an excellent ambassador to Rome. I suppose we Germans inherit from the old imperial times that ceaseless longing for Italy on the one hand, and for Germany, our home, on the other. It is different with other nations—they travel for many reasons, but we all go there because the country has for us an irresistible attraction. I have really put the case well, and think I can do no less than confer the order of the Swan upon myself. You must know that there is an *Ordensfest* to-day, so this piece of folly is really being committed in the nineteenth century. Have you seen the proclamation? It is a masterpiece! I should not have thought it possible to compress so much inconsequence, contradiction, nonsense, and sentimentality within three pages. If I were censor, I would annul the document. But it was genuine! Froriep is to be decorated to-day with the dog's collar, and I am going to condole with his wife, for we have what they call a fine day, *i.e.* in the sun one plunges over one's ankles in melted snow, and in the shade it is as slippery as possible. But never mind. The ice on the window-panes has thawed, and the sun is shining a little. Oh, Rebecca, the weather we have had! First a long and severe frost; then storms, water-spouts, snow, and ice—in short, all that nature could find that was disagreeable. To-day the birds in the garden acted a tragedy. (This is for Walter.) The crows suddenly began making a terrible noise, and it was so prolonged and so plaintive that the gardener was induced to go and see what was the matter; he found one of them lying dead, and the others were singing a requiem over the corpse!

Might not a journey here do some good to poor Elsasser? He could have the same advantages in the *Clinicum* as Kasel-

owsky had, and we should certainly do our best for him. I am convinced that my husband could get him the means, for it is quite one of the king's best qualities that he is always glad to give money to any one who needs it. As I have spoken my mind freely about him, I should also tell you how nicely he has behaved to Felix. A talented young musician, who has been for the last seven years tutor in a family at Mecklenburg, and had never heard a note of his music, wrote very prettily and modestly to Felix, asking him to look over some of his compositions, and tell him whether he thought he had any talent. Felix wrote to him, speaking in very high terms of his music, and received an answer which might have been addressed to some being from a higher sphere; indeed, it was the most natural flow of gratitude I have ever heard. Felix made an application to the king for assistance, and got an answer the day but one after; the young man is to have two hundred thalers for two years, so now he is coming, and will be able to hear and compose as much music as he likes. This is one only out of a thousand pretty, touching, amusing, and out-of-the-way things that have happened to Felix since he came.

It was Fanny's greatest wish that the Dirichlets should again live with them, as they had done before, at No. 3 Leipziger Strasse; but Rebecca did not agree to this plan, so Fanny, yielding to necessity, took charming apartments, furnished with every modern comfort, for her sister in the Leipziger Platz, No. 18. With a care and tenderness almost more motherly than sisterly, she made all the arrangements down to the smallest details—'If possible, you shall have no discomfort whatever,' she writes. 'The climate, which I cannot alter, is enough already. You must and shall find everything in good order.' It was a real blow to her that events which will be recorded by-and-by caused a tedious and expensive delay before Rebecca could enjoy all these preparations. Fanny's first letter on the subject continues:—

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: January 30, 1844.

Now for other topics, Liebetraut! Felix gave a most amusing dinner-party the other day, with Mme. Schröder-Devrient, Gade, Sciabatta, etc. Mme. Schröder is the most entertaining woman, full of fun, and with a host of good stories. Next Saturday, Felix's birthday, we have a few people; but it is such an effort to me that I really feel as if I had never had anybody to dinner before. On Sunday week my music begins again, at Felix's request, for he has heard that the gossips are saying he does not like our having musical parties. His position at the cathedral is but so-so, but how is it possible for him to get on with Strauss! You would not believe, however, how little these vexations affect him now. When you come home strong and well, as I hope you will, and have left behind all your aches and pains, and all fits of lowness too, I must take care not to be the only grumbler in the family, so I will begin this very day and try to be as amiable as possible. Oh dear, I have such a lot of visits to pay, and this winter has been so wet that you can scarcely get from room to room without soaking your feet; but as for wasting one's money on a carriage—that is not the will of Providence, as father used to say. As it is, it is quite abominable the way money goes, with nothing to show for it. I cannot help breaking out whenever I think of it. But what a splendid singer Moriani is! Just fancy, he delighted me in Lucia, in spite of the worst possible surroundings. He sings with such simplicity, and makes the whole effect merely by the way in which he produces his voice, which pleases me immensely. People say he can do nothing, which is charming!

Extract from a Letter of Felix to Rebecca.

Berlin: February 15, 1844

. . . You ask me for a programme for Holy Week. Nothing can be easier: go to the Sixtine chapel on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, and listen, without being discouraged by the inexpressible dulness of the innumerable psalms which they recite

so abominably, for it is just that which produces the contrast they need for their effects with the Lamentations, the Miserere, etc. But above all you must get a little book (to be had anywhere) giving the order of the ceremonies and the text of the psalms and anthems. Most people attempt to listen for two or three hours without any such guide, and I cannot think how they stand it. To me it would have been impossible to go a second time without being able to follow, for it is pleasant to be able to say to oneself, 'Now we are half-way through, or even only a quarter, now there is not much more,' etc. Beg Dirichlet not to betray this to his colleague Capellari, for fear of damaging that high opinion of the family sentiments which has prevailed since the famous kiss of the slipper. Then you must see Cerito dance as often as you can (this scarcely applies to Holy Week though). When I saw her two years ago with her round little face, I said that if she did not create a *furore* within two years I knew nothing of dancing, but, as you see, I am not wholly ignorant about it. Yesterday I heard Moriani sing in Lucia. He is not what he was two years ago, but a wonderful singer still. The musical public here are just like Finck, editor of the old musical gazette—they are capital at finding out the weak points of what is good and discovering merit in mediocrity, which annoys me more than anything. I feel it a personal injury when anybody depreciates a good performer or extols a bungler, although I neither pity the one nor hate the other, but it is a matter of instinct, just as I quarrel with the people here by instinct. With the clergy of the cathedral I have been quarrelling on principle, and so far I have been in the right. However,

> In the green May no one knows
> The merits of either maiden or rose

(prophetic words of Frau v. Chézy's, foreshadowing the political state of affairs here in 1844, and quite enough to account for the opera not being performed). When I am playing to Lord Westmoreland four motets, a Magnificat, and six waltzes of his own composition, I am really not capable of forming a judgment on either rose or maiden; this I actually had to do the day before yesterday.

Dear Walter, you might have drawn me by this time a horse or two, a good skirmish, a siege, or Gregory VII. at Canossa. Or you might write! Everything from Rome is interesting. Tell me what you eat and what lessons you do; whether you have found the place where Cicero stood when he said, '*Quousque tandem abutere, Catilina*,' and whether there are still to be had such good *confetti* for throwing at the shop at the corner of the Via Condotti and the Corso. You are now in the midst of the Carnival.

Rebecca to Fanny.

I have been doing the Carnival in a carriage, and from both windows and balconies; for as Borchardt has a carriage and a balcony, and Kaselowsky a balcony, we had our choice. Driving, however, made me quite wild, although I only stood upon the defensive; altogether I acted as the *juste milieu* between my *philosophe retiré du monde*, Dirichlet, who threw flowers and sugar-plums with a fine contempt for the world in general, and Walter, who was in a state of frantic delight with every mask, and even at every sugar-plum that hit him or dig in the ribs he received. They only bombard with flowers and sweetmeats now, as stucco *confetti* are *mauvais genre*, only to be resorted to at the last extremity. The bouquets flying through the air in every direction are a very pretty sight. The evening of the Moccoletti was much spoilt by the rain, but we were very merry on our, or rather on Borchardt's, balcony. The party consisted of the Sciabattas, Kaselowsky, Borchardt, and ourselves, Walter being very busy trying to extinguish the lights in the carriages below with a long *canna*. Opposite us was the grave column of Antoninus, gazing solemnly down at the mad goings on below. There has been one bad accident: a young man who tried to defend a lady with him against the dirty pocket-handkerchiefs of the crowd, was severely stabbed, and died yesterday. I only wonder that such things do not occur more frequently with the people in such a state of excitement. Last Sunday week we were at a little *bal masqué* given by your friends the Brunis, where I enjoyed myself very much

indeed, and even danced, old as I am. A saltarello by three couples, dressed as Trasteverini, for which an old lady played the tambourine, and Bruni himself the guitar, was quite charming; Signora Angelica Bruni especially, with her brother for a partner, really danced quite like a Bacchante. The frantic excitement, the shouting and clapping of hands, all seemed very strange to us phlegmatic North-Germans. Yesterday we went to the Vatican again, after a long interval, for it acts like poison on those troubled with rheumatism. There I had the pleasure of seeing the most beautiful woman my eyes ever beheld. I was struck dumb with amazement. What were the Minerva Medicea, the Nile, and Demosthenes in comparison with her? I felt just like Franz in 'Götz von Berlichingen.' She is a Frenchwoman, a Mme. de Clairbourg, and I repeat Venus was a fishwife to her. She is creating quite a sensation here. Old Fogelberg walked round and round her carriage at the Carnival, staring at her, till her husband threw a handful of *confetti* in his face. Kaselowsky is quite wild about her; he has seen her several times *en toilette* at Schnetz's and Delaroche's. She danced a *minuet* at the Carnival-ball with Mme. Delaroche and several other French people, dressed as rococo shepherdesses, but unfortunately I stayed away from a stupid feeling of shyness. Altogether my dislike of strangers, aided and abetted by Dirichlet, has played me more than one trick. I repent of it afterwards, but feel that I shall never get over it, so I must go on as I am. But did the spring in Rome make you so ridiculously weak? I cry at every fresh sprig and at every stupid joke, though I make plenty myself. The other day we were at a dreadfully slow affair at Santini's. He had covered up a bust of Palestrina with a table-napkin, and this he removed with a speech, followed by the recital of a hundred sonnets and some ugly music by the Pope's choir. There were only a lot of monks present besides ourselves. Ernst has found some playmates at Nerenz's. In fine weather they go for a walk, and when it is wet they play indoors, to the secret delight of whichever mamma has not got them. This of course is only a joke, for they are really very good and most amusing.

Fanny to Rebecca.

. . . On August 1 and 2 Felix is to conduct a great musical festival at Zweibrücken, where, among other things, 'St. Paul' and the 'Walpurgisnacht' are going to be performed, and I cannot help thinking that you will very likely play the last act of your travels there, and take your farewell of the beauties of Nature, while the trumpets are heralding your return to the pleasures of art and of friendship. Thus the symphony of your tour will close with a splendid *finale à la* Beethoven. The final chords will be long enough if you begin on August 1 and reach here by the end of the month. I throw this out as a bone for you to pick at your leisure.

I rehearsed the 'Walpurgisnacht' for the second time yesterday, and we sing it next Sunday. It went off splendidly. Mme. Decker, Auguste Löwe, Bader, and our new bass singer Beer did wonders in the chorus, and you cannot think how fine the music is, and so pleasant to sing. These rehearsals are the greatest treat to us. The sisters and brothers dined here, and in the afternoon we parted in pursuit of various artistic pleasures. Felix, whose sweetness and good-temper are still *crescendo*, took Sebastian and Minna's youngest to the Königstadt theatre, and we and the Pauls went to the first concert of the charming Milanollos, two girls of eleven and fourteen years of age who play the violin, the elder one exquisitely, and the younger very cleverly. Both are a pleasure to look at. They are dressed coquettishly but sensibly in short white frocks, the elder one with her dark hair in beautiful long plaits, the other with a curly head like a cherub. The public have gone wild about them, and with reason. Felix has gained his point *contre vent et marée*, and vocal music is to be introduced at the subscription-concerts; at the last we are to have the ninth symphony and Felix's psalm, 'When Israel out of Egypt came.'

You ask why we did not send you the 'Wedding March' in a letter? In the first place because it is so long that we could hardly have got it into a sheet of notepaper, and in the second, what are you thinking of? This year you have oranges, dirt, and sunshine, and unless we keep peas, cleanliness, and music

here for you, you will perhaps never come back. If I only knew what home-news the brothers have told you! On Felix's birthday we had a very nice *fête* (as Gans says, it is better to hear some things twice than not at all), including all the pleasant people of our acquaintance, and as few stupid ones as possible; the day before Mme. Schröder-Devrient announced her arrival, and, as Felix is a great friend and admirer of hers, we of course invited her. She was very pleasant, sang as often as she was asked, among other things three duets with Mme. Decker, from 'Figaro' and 'Titus,' and every one was delighted. On the following Sunday we had our first *matinée* in the garden-hall, which we got up to quite a cosy temperature; the sun streamed in straight into my face, so next time I shall have the blinds put up. Felix composed in two days some very pretty and brilliant variations for four hands. I carried off the sheets on Saturday one by one as they were finished, and practised them a little, and they went very well. Nothing shows more clearly how young you are than your thinking that in a few years we shall be too old to undertake the journey again. By the time you reach the age I am now you will not be at all afraid of growing a little older. Now that I am getting so near forty, I think how young and lively I mean to be when I am fifty. You will feel just the same, and we will neither of us give up the idea of a tour together. *Ad vocem* growing old, I send my best wishes, although a little late, for Dirichlet's birthday; he is again a year older than I. All we brothers and sisters spent the evening here together, and drank your health. Indeed you are never forgotten, especially when Hensel is in the mood for giving toasts, which has happened very often this winter. Felix is most grotesquely amused by him, and treasures up his rhymes with many regrets at being denied the faculty himself.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Rome: March 17.

Bravissima, dear Fanny! Our future home smiles at me from afar. How nice, too, that I shall never be able to go out without passing your door, or rather *not* passing, for I shall

not be able to resist a delightful quarter of an hour's chat. We are *contentissimi*, and while sending you a vote of confidence in due form I solemnly invest you with the portfolios of the household—the Cabinet, the Home Office, and the Education Department—and will instruct my minister of finance to put the necessary sums at your disposal. I am eagerly looking forward to the little conservatory, and fancy I see from here the orange-tree with its dried-up fruit and withered blossom. How it will remind me of Italy! Can you give us no news of Naples? Is there a revolution there, or is there not? Travellers say not, but the well-informed are mysteriously silent. The political atmosphere looks lowering, and the *nave di S. Pietro* seems rather shaky.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Rome: March 30, 1844.

. . . Of the environs we have only seen Frascati and Grotta Ferrata, where there was a ham-fair last Monday. We had a delightfully clear day and a merry drive in spite of various obstacles, mostly of the laughable sort. In the first place, Kaselowsky *would* sit with his back to the horses, so he had to leave the carriage when half way, and lie back during the rest of the time in an ominous silence, which he broke after sundry *fritti's* and *umido's* at the *osteria con cucina*, but continued rather cross till after dinner. Then his dog was missing, and he reproached Moser in few but severe words (please do not forget this incident), till the stupid animal, which has not a grain of sense, turned up. We got back at seven, quite exhausted, having walked through Mondragone, Taverno, and Falconiere, amid the crowd of ham-dealers. (By-the-by, I could never have believed that the neighbourhood of Rome could produce such a number of ugly women as we saw at Grotta Ferrata—one species, a kind of stout old hag, riding, was especially fine.) I begged Dirichlet to allow me to close the shutters and say 'not at home,' but he would not, and proved to demonstration that no strangers could possibly come, and that he wanted to see our daily friends. We gave way, the gentlemen disposed themselves on two chairs each, while I took to the sofa, till tea, which we had an hour

earlier than usual, with eggs, ham, etc., as we had eaten nothing since one o'clock, except nuts and raisins, which one gets everywhere. We had just finished; the table was strewed with the ruins of Troy, eggshells, ham-parings, etc., and Moser and Kaselowsky were just taking leave, when the bell rang and in rushed Mme. Bruni in a velvet mantilla and hat with feathers, Mme. Bellay in an elegant Parisian toilet, her daughter, and all the husbands (N.B. The first time they had ever come in the evening). A dreadful moment ensued before the ruins had been cleared away, fresh boiling water brought, and my cap hastily adjusted. I count upon your sympathy! Dugasseau also came in a little later, and the session lasted till midnight. If you think that that was the end of it, you are much mistaken. When they had all gone away, and I had gone to bed and Dirichlet settled down to work, it was discovered that Kaselowsky had forgotten his beast, which, after the events of the day, was ridiculous enough. It took some time to persuade it to settle down, but the children were delighted in the morning, and took it into their beds and fed it. Sebastian should have been there too. He would also join in another of their pastimes. Whenever the bell rings they both rush out and shout like mad, *Chi è?*

The topic of the day is that the diligence has been attacked by brigands between Naples and Terracina and pillaged. It is but too true, O Hensel, for Horkel, who was in the cabriolet, has given us a very comical account of the whole affair. They issued their commands to the unlucky passengers—*nel nome di Gesù Cristo e della Santissima Madonna faccia in terra*, and then rifled their pockets and their boxes. Horkel is quite the hero of the day, just as we were after our robbery. He only lost his watch and six scudi, and you may tell his mother that the fright has agreed with him rather than otherwise, for the day after his arrival he took a walk with us in the Villa Poniatowsky and drank tea with us in the evening. Yesterday I saw the procession of palms in St. Peter's, but, not having spent the previous night in the ladies' tribune, I had to stand, and could not, therefore, stop long. Dirichlet was to have joined in the pro-

cession, but did not, for want of a pair of breeches, which he did not feel inclined to purchase, so after all he stayed at home, working. If I did not make him go out for a walk now and then he really would overwork himself. In the afternoon, as I said before, we were at the Villa Poniatowsky till after sunset. If I were not afraid of wearying you with my constant talk about flowers, I would tell you of the quantities of hyacinths I brought home, and of how charmingly my room is adorned to-day, with nosegays from all the seven hills of Rome. It is so lovely that I feel sure nobody will come to see it.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: March 18, 1844.

. . . We have been leading a most dissipated life here lately. Last week we had two or three engagements for every day, including four large evening parties, on four successive evenings, at one of which we heard the Countess Rossi, at another Miss Birch (an English singer, who sings just like Clara Novello), and at two others Madame Decker. The latter gave the most splendid *soirées* you can imagine on two successive Thursdays; they were intended in honour of the Duke of Mecklenburg and his *Theater-Intendant*, but unfortunately the former did not come to Berlin at all, and the latter had to go back after the first *fête*. These failures, however, did not impair either the brilliancy of the *soirée* or the good humour of our hostess, whose voice was in excellent condition. Last Sunday we had the most brilliant Sunday-music that ever was, both as regards the music and the audience. When I tell you that we had twenty-two carriages in the court, and Liszt and eight princesses in the room, you will dispense with my describing the splendours of my dwelling; but I will give you my programme: quintet by Hummel, duet from 'Fidelio,' variations by David, played by that capital little Joachim, who is no infant prodigy, but a most praiseworthy child, and Sebastian's great friend to boot, two songs, one of which, Eckert's beautiful 'Lass die Schmerzen dieser Erde,' Felix and Mme. Decker performed by heart, with eminent success, as usual. I give you my permission to make no secret of this to Eckert. Then

came the 'Walpurgisnacht,' which my public have been eagerly looking forward to for these four weeks, and which went off capitally. We had three rehearsals, which the singers enjoyed so much that they would have liked to have as many again. Felix was present at the last, and was perfectly satisfied. I should have liked him to accompany, but that he decidedly refused; however, he played the overture with me, and helped me in the difficult parts, by putting in bits, now in the bass, now in the treble, so that it was a kind of improvised arrangement for four hands, which sounded very well. I am now obliged to put off my Sunday-music till after Easter, for Felix wants our time and our singers. You must know that on Palm Sunday he is going to have 'Israel in Egypt' in the garrison-church, with about 450 performers. An enormous orchestra is being built for the purpose round the organ, and I hope it will be a grand success. Before that time the ninth symphony, with the chorus, is to be given at the last concert, so that Felix has enough to do. He is also writing a concerto for England, and has to correct the proofs of his new works, attend to his innumerable correspondents, and get through the rest of the day's work; he is in the best of spirits, and looking forward with great pleasure to his journey. The other day, after the rehearsal of 'Israel,' the weather was fine for a wonder, so we loitered about in the streets, and finally started for a walk. In the evening we all played at 'Black Peter' with Geheimrath Böckh, and let Sebastian paint us black moustaches. It was very wrong of you not to go to Delaroche's ball. On a journey one must put aside all shyness, or one loses too much. You will guess that I speak from experience. We were highly amused at your account of Dirichlet at the Carnival. I fancy I see him throwing bouquets with a learned man's contempt for folly of all kinds. But did he never relax into a smile?

Fanny to Rebecca.

March 31, 1844 (Palm Sunday).

At this moment you are coming home, dead tired, from St. Peter's, and after a hasty luncheon you will sally forth

again into the lovely air, for if we are having the most delightful spring weather, what must it be with you! By the time this letter reaches you, several days will have passed since your birthday, and yet I cannot send it till to-morrow, that I may inclose an account of to-day's performance of 'Israel in Egypt,' which has given us so much to do lately. But first of all I must wish you many happy returns, and hope that you and yours may have health, happiness, and fine weather on your birthday, for then I am sure you will spend a charming day out of doors in some beautiful spot. I am looking forward to your description of the *fête*, but not to the day itself, because then Felix will be gone, and the mere thought of that is disgusting. How soon we become familiarised with anything pleasant; and although I cannot say that I accept it all as if it ought to be as it is, yet I do not know how we shall do without him. They do not come back before the end of August, when you, I hope, will be here also, and so I will pass the summer in joyful anticipation of the good time in store for us. There is so much noise and confusion about me that I can hardly find a quiet moment for writing. This evening after the oratorio we expect some people for a hot supper, and as we are dining at the Pauls', and Heinrich, as you will remember, has original ideas of arranging a table, you will not be surprised to hear that I am having the cloth laid for the evening in the morning; running into the garden for a whiff of fresh air, receiving visitors, and attending to arrangements for to-morrow, the 1st, between whiles.

Monday, April 1.—'Israel,' our supper, and everything else is now past and gone, but each in its way deserving of 'honourable mention.' I must give you an account of the whole week. The rehearsals of the oratorio and the choruses of the symphony together overwhelmed Felix with work, so that one day he did not get his dinner till seven o'clock. The symphony on Thursday was splendid, and played with the greatest enthusiasm. Each member of the choir I met in the corridor afterwards was in a state of exaltation, and never did I understand and appreciate the gigantic work as I did this time. But you should have seen how Felix conducts it, and the way he has made the orchestra understand it. It went off splendidly, and I do not remember

a more successful musical evening. The two last rehearsals of 'Israel' were so far from perfection that I went with some apprehension to the church; it was crowded to the very doors, but seats near the altar had been reserved for us and the rest of the aristocracy. The basses made a gross mistake in the first recitative, but after that all went beautifully; the three huge masses, the choir, the orchestra, and the organ were in such wonderful harmony, and the organ especially has such a glorious effect that I should never like to hear an oratorio without it again. Afterwards we all assembled round my supper-table, and set to work on an immense fish, a ditto turkey, and an excellent 'cup.' Felix was in good spirits, Bunsen in raptures, and everybody happy, only for the shadow cast over us by the news of Thorwaldsen's death, which depressed Hensel so much that he was not in the vein for giving toasts.

The most interesting piece of home news is that Caro has won his spurs. He and our watchman Winter seized and took to the police an individual who was spending the night in the little cellar by the garden, and who most likely belonged to a set of gentlemen who robbed No. 1 that very night. Felix was immensely tickled at my giving a thaler to Winter and a piece of roast mutton to Caro; but I am very glad that our precautionary measures have saved us from actual robbery, so that we have not spent our money in vain. Four little fruit-trees, for Felix's four children, have been planted to-day, by my orders, on the grass-plot in the courtyard which you laid down. There is a great deal going on in the garden now, which is a pleasure to see. A couple of our oldest friends leave Berlin this month —the Devrients. He has accepted an engagement as director of the theatre at Dresden, by which he hopes to make his fortune. It is sad, but too true, that though our circle of mere acquaintances increases daily, the number of our real friends is diminishing to an alarming degree. So says Hensel, so says Felix, and so say I.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Rome: April 13, 1844.

All this week I have been thinking how nice it was that the 11th was a Thursday, mail day, but when it came, not a single letter from home. It was a great disappointment, and marred my otherwise bright and pleasant birthday. I owe you an account of Holy Week, which, thanks to Providence, I survived, thus giving another proof of how much better I am, for, though fatigued and exhausted like the rest of the world, I am none the worse. On Thursday I was, I regret to say, present at the washing of the feet, an unpleasant process, which however Walter thoroughly enjoyed, entering with much gusto into every detail. We gave up the dinner, and had ours instead in the court of a little *osteria*, first cleaning our own knives and forks. Then we went back to the Vatican, in such good time that the Sixtine was not yet open, and we rested half an hour in the illuminated Paolina. Here we could collect our thoughts and get into a proper frame of mind, which is almost impossible among the ill-behaved crowd of the Sixtine and St. Peter's. Then we went with the stream into the Sixtine, where our patience through the long pauses and endless Psalms was at length rewarded by the Lamentations, which were exquisitely sung, and the Miserere, unfortunately Baini's, which you told me about, and which, moreover, they sang very incorrectly. I was surprised to find that the pause for the silent Paternoster, after the last light is extinguished, the description of which I have never read either in books of travel or in your letters without tears, made no impression upon me whatever in reality. There was really no stillness at all, what with coughing, blowing of noses, scraping of feet, and the chattering of the *Inglesi*; then the whole looked so very like a comedy got up for the benefit of the *forestieri*. On Good Friday we took your advice, always worth following, and attended the early service, with the Passion and the Improperie. How extremely beautiful it is! Am I wrong in thinking that Palestrina often puts me in mind of Fasch? We walked home across the pleasant meadows, dined, rested awhile, and then drove, rather late, to

the Sixtine, where I had to stand while six candles were extinguished, before we got to Allegri's Miserere. Thanks to my little book, which enabled me to follow the Improperie too, I never got weary. Afterwards (as we had done on Thursday) we went to St. Peter's, where we saw the Pope say his prayers, and met a number of acquaintances, among others Delaroche, who told us it was our duty to hear the Mass by Palestrina on Saturday morning. I thought it very cruel, but he said, 'Je vous plains, Madame, mais il le faut absolument.' So we really did set out again on Saturday, and waded through a number of *lezioni* and *tratti* to a splendid *Gloria*. We spent the evening of Good Friday at home, in a not very appropriate manner, as a number of rather lively people dropped in. We have made acquaintance at the eleventh hour with some very nice French people, a M. Cassas[1] (son of the one who published the large collection of engravings), who has been consul at Palermo and Lisbon, but has retired, and is just returning from the First Cataract with his pretty and pleasant wife. They are living in our house, and came up in the evening. Our usual circle of gentlemen was complete, and they were at first divided between admiration of the beautiful woman and disgust at having to speak French. When the Cassas left, they rewarded themselves for the temporary check on their spirits by making a vigorous raid on the bread and butter and playing pranks of all kinds. On Easter Sunday we did not attempt the High Mass, but stood on chairs near the Obelisk to receive the Benediction with the people, and in the evening drove *en famille*, taking Ernst, to the 'golden church,' where we had another picture from the 'Arabian Nights' in the illumination of the dome.

The morning of the day before yesterday we went to see Cornelius, who has finished two walls of the Campo Santo, then on to the Vatican to take leave of the Camere and the picture-gallery. After dinner we took poor invalid Elsasser for a drive, so I could not write, and yesterday we were at Tivoli, where I had still less opportunity. Bother it! here comes Santini, and

[1] L. F. Cassas published *Voyage pittoresque de la Syrie, de la Phénicie, de la Palestine et de la Basse-Egypte* in 1779, and *Voyage pittoresque de l'Istrie et de la Dalmatie*, 1808, both being collections of engravings, with text by De la Porte.

he paid us three visits yesterday! He stayed rather long; and Chelini, a handsome Piarist monk, who often comes to see us, dropped in, as well as Madame Nerenz, so we improvised a *soirée musicale* for the Padri in the middle of the day. I must now be terse, as I have much to tell you yet. First of all, Elsasser's picture, the Campo Santo at Pisa by moonlight, is finished, and it is beautiful beyond description. The execution is as finished as in a Dutch master, but the truth and the poetry of it! Dr. Braun calls it 'the philosophy of moonlight'; but that is not the idea it conveys to me. The only thing is to *see* it, and that more than once, till your eyes can take in all the details, provided you succeed in keeping them dry. On Sunday the poor fellow came to see us. He never left his room all through the winter, but he stayed with us at least three hours, and in spite of his bad grammar and compliments was very interesting. Now I must come to the prose of this poetry of moonlight. This picture, on which he has been at work with the greatest devotion for nine months, and which is one of the most beautiful paintings of modern times, was ordered by the King of Würtemburg for 70 Frederics-d'or (60*l.*), and he will not be induced to ask for more! I have exerted all my eloquence upon his brother, but in vain; and I dare not say anything to himself, as he is so very excitable. Hensel can always hit upon some expedient, and he knows everybody, so could he not find some means of representing to the king that it is impossible for a sick man to live upon such a sum as that? I only speak of the time it has taken him, for that, at least, ought to be paid for. It is a picture which, according to the universal opinion, will be some day—too late for the artist to profit by it—worth its weight in gold. If I were the King of Prussia's particular friend, I should not rest till I had got a pension for the poor fellow for the few years he has to live. 'I do not know whether you understand me,' as Professor Niedlich says. Nobody would believe, unless they had seen it, that such patriarchal simplicity as that of the two Elsassers could exist in this wicked world. So much for Elsasser. If I only had room, I would write the story of the cushion I worked for him, and which Minna carried to his house to have an opportunity of seeing the picture. She

was quite hurt at his offering her a scudo, but asked permission to come again and bring Cornelius's cook. The chapter of Minna Dirichlet and Julie Cornelius in Rome would be worth a whole letter to itself. We met the other day, at the Cassas', the secretary of the French Academy, who paid me the greatest compliment I ever received, by saying, after I had played something, that he had had the honour of hearing me four years ago at the French Academy. Is not that an order of the Red Eagle first class? I am very glad to hear of all your musical enjoyments, but not of the decrease in our circle of friends. If you and Felix have any difficulty in gathering nice people around you, either there can be no nice people in Berlin, or there must be something in the atmosphere which makes it impossible to make friends. It cannot be denied that one drive in the country round Rome does more to bring people together than any number of meetings in a close room. Which reminds me that I have not said anything about our departure —for why? we do not depart. To all of us it seems a wrench to leave Rome. This has been a winter for which we can never be thankful enough. We have all been well and happy, and Dirichlet has enjoyed his work, and been very friendly with the artists, especially the Elsassers, for whom he has a great affection. But we must do our duty, and see Naples and Sicily.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: April 30, 1844.

. . . In spite of the dry and cold spring, and the constant east wind, which covers everything with dust, everything is already green here. The grass is in splendid condition, and the nightingale in excellent voice. But I am in one of the least pleasant phases of spring—all the carpets are up, the floors have not yet been waxed, the curtains are at the wash, and brooms and dustpans are going all over the house. Such earthly troubles as these do not touch your ideal life. You ask, how would many of your Roman acquaintances look here? Surely not to advantage, for it is one of the privileges of that strange climate that everything capable of improvement looks its very best, while at the same time, hopeless ugliness, folly, and

Philistinism look their very worst. Do not you also feel that you are more gentle, less inclined to be hard upon people, and that your good points seem more prominent than usual? This it is which makes one less severe with others. Then the enjoyment of the beauty of Rome, which one shares with the other visitors, creates a sort of freemasonry. You will be better off when you come back than we were, for our raptures only disgusted people, while I am looking forward to talking over the Pope and all his works with you. I am much touched by what you say of Elsasser, as I can see how it all is so well. I hope it will not fall on stony ground. Hensel, at any rate, will do all in his power to serve him. Did I not always tell you that his bad grammar and complimentary speeches go for nothing, and that he is an ideal human being? I wish I could see him again, for I am really fond of him. His brother was little more than a boy then. I am glad to hear that he also is likely to become a good man. How they must have enjoyed being with you—so grateful as they are for the smallest kindness shown them!

The Felicians left us nearly three weeks ago, and I am as melancholy as an old cat. The last thing he did in music here was to direct 'Faust' at the Radziwills'. It went off very well, and the *soirée* was pleasant, as they always are at that noble house. Since the dear Felicians went away we have had no small children in the house, which is a great pity, as we have the prettiest little kids just now. Walter's white goat has a snow-white young one, and the gardener's two charming gray and black-and-white ones, which amuse me very much. The pleasure my big boy takes in them makes me think how delighted the little ones would have been. But as we are obliged to limit the number of our flock, and the goats have unfortunately taken after the rest of the family, and produced only males, the poor young generation is doomed to slaughter. I shall honestly pay Walter the market price of his specimen, and I can conscientiously promise not to pollute my own interior with the victim, for not only did I not care for *capretti* in Italy, but I could never bring myself to eat any animal I had been personally acquainted with.

Great changes are taking place in the ministry, and no one knows why. Chief-President Böttcher from Prussia is to be minister of justice instead of Mühler, and Alvensleben has resigned, but we can neither of us remember the name of his successor. Commerce is to be made into a separate department, and it is said that the king has signed a decree in council appropriating nine million thalers to the building of a cathedral in Berlin. I do not believe in this plan any more than I do in the Order of the Swan, which is reposing on the laurels it has *not* earned. Every now and then these announcements are made, and then there is a general outcry, which seems permitted now, and the whole thing drops. But upon the whole we do progress *quand même*; there is no question of that. The very way in which politics and social questions are handled in the papers now, proves it. It is remarkable, too, how certain phantoms, at the bare mention of which people used to cross themselves, now appear by daylight, and are found to behave most respectably. Dahlmann has published a charming book, his lectures on the English Revolution. He, for one, has never forgotten his part, probably because he does not play one. Glasbrenner has written a capital 'Mirror' for 1844. One passage among others—'Here you behold the grand distribution of orders—now, you boys, do not crowd round so'—delights me immensely.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Rome: May 1

(With a vignette.) If this is not melancholy—Tasso's decayed oak, by the light of the setting sun—I do not know what is. It exactly suits my last letter from Rome. Next Sunday we start irrevocably for Naples, by *vetturino*, for the brigands have been caught and hanged, and the road is safer than ever. Now I am almost regretting that we ever came at all, for life is full enough already of bitter-sweet recollections without our hunting them out. Why voluntarily lay such a heavy load of regret upon our own shoulders! Basta! You expressed in your piece 'Ponte Molle' all the wretched sensations which I am going through at this moment, as you did before me. The others may laugh till they experience the same themselves.

Again we have been having a few of those days which belong exclusively at Rome; one at Albano, in weather such as God rarely sends, even in Italy. This time we did not follow in your steps, but arranged the Albanian Hills quite differently, taking first one day, as you know, for Frascati and Grotta Ferrata; then last Tuesday week, we went to Albano, round the lake to Monte Cavo, where we had lunch, down to the lake of Nemi, and back to Albano, by Nemi, Genzano, and Aricia. But I was not so heroic as you, for the ride down Monte Cavo alone was too much for me, so I walked from Nemi to Genzano, where Borchardt surprised me with a *corricolo*, which brought us back to Albano. The lake of Nemi has taken quite a hold on my imagination. The charming outline of the dark little town by the balmy water, with the sea beyond, and the spring over all, was so lovely! We were lucky enough to find on Monte Cavo the first *Waldmeister* (woodruff), and concocted for our dinner at Albano a classic *Maitrank*, which with the light of the setting sun on the sea sent our by no means depressed spirits up to a very high pitch. That evening neither the Brunis nor the Bellays made their appearance, so we spent it very quietly with Elsasser, Kaselowsky, and Borchardt, who had all three made the excursion with us.

Another very pleasant day was the 26th, Kaselowsky's birthday. We gave him some nice presents—a straw hat, a cameo ring, which he had been ogling for some time, and some plants for his balcony, and Borchardt presented him with a double opera-glass. The two dined with us, and in the afternoon we went to the Villa Pamphili, and in the evening his artist friends Hallmann and Lehmann assembled round a cake, a present from Moser, and a cup. All this sent Kaselowsky into a state of happiness I should find it hard to describe, but which was the best part of the whole day. Borchardt has given large orders for pictures to both the Elsassers and Kaselowsky, and altogether behaved very handsomely to Elsasser, which we are glad to know of before our departure. The long-talked-of excursion to Cervara is fixed for to-morrow. Yesterday we spent the whole day in the Vatican, in the Etruscan Museum, the library with the 'Nozze Aldobrandini,' the beautiful room with

copies of the arabesques from the Loggie, and took leave of the frescoes and the Madonna di Foligno. I am going presently to August Elsasser, to play to him, with Borchardt, parts of the 'Midsummer-night's Dream' and the Hebrides. (If we two were here together, little Elsasser would not be always pressing me to play, which you know I cannot bear.) Then we dine at the Lepre, and go to the Corsini gallery, then to San Pietro in Montorio, and after that take leave of the Delaroches, with whom we spent a very pleasant evening lately. They were, so to speak, alone, and I played Mozart's sonatas with Mme. Delaroche to a running accompaniment of fun. She gave me her portrait, an engraving taken merely for their friends by her husband. August Elsasser has also given me a beautiful water-colour sketch, so I shall, without intending it, bring home a complete album.

You talk of the reflections you write in your diary. I could never bring myself to write down anything merely for my own reading. All my attempts in the diary line have turned out perfectly childish, and I content myself now with noting down important events. You are to all intents and purposes my diary.

Now good-bye from Rome! Ah, it is sad to part!

The Dirichlets did not stay long in Naples this time, and a letter soon arrived from

Palermo.

This heading is so significant that I need only state briefly that we have arrived in safety, though a good deal fatigued, and that Palermo is worth all the fatigue in the world. Confused and entangled as my ideas are, Vesuvius, sea-sickness, Indian figs, and regrets at leaving Rome, all whirling round together in my poor head. I must try and tell you what we have been doing. At Naples the weather was much against us, for each morning we had a stifling sirocco, and each afternoon a thunderstorm.

There was no room for us, I am sorry to say, in the Villa di Roma, so we lodged opposite to where you did, at 31 Santa Lucia.

The view was not equal to that from the Villa di Roma, as the bakehouse of the barracks hid the islands, but still it was very beautiful. Vesuvius, with its cloud of smoke, looked straight in at our window. But we seem to have left all this so far behind already that I cannot get up any interest in writing about it. At noon on Tuesday Jacoby escorted us on board, and there we said good-bye to him, for he goes back to Rome by the end of the week, and then returns to Germany. Our *Ercolano* was supposed to start at one o'clock, but we had to wait till three, as their Serene Highnesses the Count of Syracuse's horses, who were to go with us, had not made their appearance. Ernst and Walter had in the meanwhile made great friends with the company on board, among whom there were several Germans. The sea was very calm, and our dinner on deck very amusing. Nobody was ill, in spite of the captain's forebodings. I remained on deck till after midnight, watching the phosphorescence on the water, and the innumerable stars, which made it almost as light as day. Ernst was in raptures with the small beds, which did not appear quite so attractive to me. I lay down in my dress on a sofa, but soon woke up in a miserable state, and continued in tortures till we got on shore at Palermo. I followed your advice, and lay stretched out on a bench, endeavouring once or twice to take a look at the dark-blue sea and the shore of Sicily, but failed utterly. When we were close to Palermo, Dirichlet made me get up once more; and then, despite my misery, a thrill of admiration ran through me at the sight of the wondrous beauty. It is far superior to Naples.

We had a dreadful confusion on board with the first Italian custom-house officers who would not yield to reason, and then the landing in little boats did not exactly improve my condition, as it was very rough. At last, however, we were on *terra firma*, and found ourselves in a comfortable hotel, though not close to the sea, I regret to say, for the fine Hotel Trinacria will not be open till July. After a little sleep, a good wash, a change of dress, and an excellent dinner, all our sufferings were forgotten, and we spent the afternoon very pleasantly in the gardens of the Villa Butera, and those belonging to the Duca di Serra di Falco. If you wish to see what I am about, pay a visit

to Gropius,[1] and then read Goethe. It is now evening, and we have just returned from the public gardens, the *marina*, and *sorbetti*. It is too beautiful; one feels quite Oriental, and is reminded at the same time of Homer. The vegetation is already half African, and so are the people. Indian figs spring from all the crannies in the roofs, the catalpa-trees are as large as our beeches, and there is another quite common tree growing in all the public places, with large blossoms of a deep red, which I have taken quite a fancy to. Add to all this that the spring is quite three weeks later than usual, so that everything is in its first bloom and freshness. The orange- and lemon-trees are white as snow, and the perfume of these and the acacias and roses gave me such a headache last night that I could hardly bear it. I *did* bear it, though. And then the shape and colour of the mountains and the sea! If you ever return to the land of promise, you must come here, and then you need not long for Syria, as this is the finest overture to the East. This morning we were in Roger's Chapel, which Elsasser has sketched, and in Santa Rosalio. See Hensel's sketch-books. But I must say for myself, that I learned to make use of my eyes in Rome, and now not an ancient window or a dirty pillar escapes me. You told us that for six weeks before you left Rome you cried by the table-spoonful every day. I acted on the opposite plan, for I began to cry at Albano, and am only leaving off now. But the distracting noise at Naples had a great deal to do with it. Here it is quiet, calm, indeed almost divine. This afternoon I had a little nap, and when I woke up, like Paul at Brussels, I could not for the life of me remember what country I was on speaking terms with. Besides all the geography one runs through oneself, the constant meeting with strangers from all quarters of the world, each talking of their own land, adds to the confusion in my poor head. We think of remaining here till June 1, to see the neighbourhood, Selinunt, Segest, Taormina, and Cephalù, and then going on to Messina by steamboat, and back to Naples from thence. Excuse this muddled letter: I hope I shall soon be able to collect my faculties a little and get over my astonishment at finding myself in Sicily, the

[1] Gropius's Panoramas, much frequented at that time.

land of Homer and of the Saracens, the cradle of the Hohenstaufens, and the spot where the creation of the world is said to have taken place. I wish a few of the fleas had been left out. The heat is very bearable, the nights being almost cool. All the garden-walks are covered with orange-blossoms and fallen lemons. Enough for to-day of blossoms, hills, and sunshine. Farewell, and sympathise with me in my happiness at for once dreaming the dream of life in all its beauty.

Extract from a Letter of Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: May 18, 1844.

We fully enter into the sadness which pervaded your last letter from Rome, with the charming vignette of Tasso's decayed oak. Oh, Dirichlet, how I shall enjoy hearing you go into raptures over the country you used to abuse before you knew it! I only hope we shall not be obliged to give up speaking Italian for good and all! Hensel is quite afraid of the severe criticisms you will pass on his uncritical, ungrammatical fluency. First of all, though, I will tell you something you will be glad to hear, although I am afraid it may end in nothing. After reading your letter about Elsasser's picture, and consulting with us, Paul has decided to send a bill of exchange for 100 Louis-d'or to Valentini, to be paid at once to Elsasser, if he will let him have the picture. I am very much afraid this over-scrupulous man will not make up his mind to send it to us, and compensate the King of Würtemburg afterwards; but perhaps, when the king hears that private individuals have offered him a much higher price, he may be induced to give more himself. I should be so glad if Paul got the picture!

Monday is old Schadow's eighty-first birthday, and there is to be an immense dinner at Kroll's, on the Exercierplatz (which is another surprise for you), and I, *vu les circonstances*, have accepted the invitation, but, possessing no suitable summer-toilette, had to get a gown, cap, collar, and everything, in all haste yesterday. As, however, it would be an unheard-of event for me to appear at a public dinner—eclipses and leap-years are frequent occurrences in comparison—I suppose something will happen to prevent my going.

The garden is looking better than ever, the fresh-sown grass sparkles like emeralds, and it is thorough growing weather; but I am afraid that by the time you come back you will have to put on spectacles to look for the green, the lilac-leaves will be like tobacco, and the grass-plots will have vanished like fairy-tales, and you will think it was only my boasting; but it is true, nevertheless.

Walesrode, in his last work, maintains that the Spree is the emblem of calm, steady progress, which made me laugh for three hours straight off. The minister has delivered himself of a new decree respecting the universities, which equals his former masterpieces. In future Dirichlet will have to hold a disputation with his audience. The whole production is again absurd, self-contradictory, and illogical, and shows a tendency to bribe the young men, though they have not the pluck to do even that thoroughly. It really makes one's blood boil.

Altogether public affairs are not in a pleasant state. The frightful speculation in railway shares, the distress among the weavers of Silesia, for whom every possible effort is being made, the Grimms' letter to the papers stating that Hoffman von Fallersleben was an unwelcome guest on their birthday, the repression of all attempts at promoting general intercourse between the Universities of Germany by imprisonment or expulsion, the fresh prohibitory decrees issued every day, the way the government and the police spend all their time in meddling and leave the public safety and sanitary matters to take care of themselves —these, and such as these, are the topics of the day. Nothing else happens. Meanwhile our life flows on in its usual course, and the only noise that we hear is the click of the Boccia-balls. Albertine and I sit out every evening on two pretty new garden-chairs, watching with much amusement the games of the grown-up children.

Felix to Fanny.

4 Hobart Place, Eaton Square: May 13, 1844.

Dearest Fanny,—I should have written to you long ago if I could always do what I liked, but I resolved at any rate that

I would announce my safe arrival in London to you, and beg you to hand the news on to Paul. I found it very hard to leave wife and children, but I had good news of them this morning, and hope that by the time of my return the quiet and country air will have done them more good than all the medicine in the world. Heaven grant it be so! You cannot think what anxiety I went through at Leipzig.

The journey here was as pleasant as could be, especially the crossing. I found Klingemann well and happy, and the same dear old fellow he always was. He is going to add a postscript. If Cécile were but with me, this would be as pleasant a visit to England as I have ever had, for all the old friends are so unchanged, so kind and loving, that I am quite touched by it. Nothing, however, can be complete without Cécile, and so I welcome the multifarious occupations every moment brings. I hope, too, that my labours will not be entirely fruitless; at least I hear very satisfactory news from the Philharmonic, and if all goes on as well as at the rehearsal of the day before yesterday (when my symphony in A minor was played really splendidly), I hope to be of some service to the institution. You shall hear more on this subject, but now for the postscript.

Klingemann.—

And so we are sending a joint letter once more, and olden times have come back again! Ah, if only it were the real old times, and we, that is I, could but be everlastingly young! I see no change in Felix; indeed we all think him looking stronger and better than two years ago. He is cheery and in good spirits, and it is a real pleasure to be with him. Nobody is a greater gainer by the whole affair than I. What can be more delightful for a solitary bachelor, with no home-circle of his own, than to have such a pleasant companion, with a prospect, too, of keeping him for some months? Poor Cécile! What a long separation it is for her and for him! How we should like to have her here! But with all my sorrow on her account, I cannot help enjoying myself very much. It is a providential arrangement, I am sure, to compensate me for the loss of the Beneckes this summer. Another fortunate circum-

stance is that I have had B. living with me the whole winter, and the good fellow's ways of speaking, late hours, unpunctuality, and other aggravating peculiarities have rubbed off some of my bachelor corners, so that I can now boast of being a pattern of patience and toleration, which, however, there is no occasion for with Felix.

With his usual modesty, he is sure not to tell you of his successes, but they are many and great. His reception here has been more cordial than ever, and indeed *could* not be more so. No wonder that the kindly feeling is mutual. It was very charming at the first Philharmonic rehearsal on Saturday, but at the concert, yesterday, it was perfectly delightful—such a warmth and vivacity as has not been seen for a long time, and each and everybody knew the reason why. You should have seen the glances of intelligence which passed between the initiated, the friends, even from opposite sides of the concert-hall.

I write about your brother knowing that it is what you will most care to hear, but when I come to myself I am full of thanks and all sorts of gratitude. The foot-rug, the soft, warm, beautiful foot-rug, I spread on the floor immediately, with infinite pride, and, if I do tread such a dearly valued present under foot, it is only for want of the moral courage to have it made into a waistcoat. Then again it comes so at the right moment, for I have just had my rooms fresh painted and papered; but, out of pure stinginess, I did not get a new carpet, and this rug exactly covers the shabbiest place. And you wrote me such nice letters!—*two* letters! The first alone deserves particular thanks. If only I were not such a lazy beast, and had written at once, while my heart was full, then I should have done the right thing, and you would have got the right sort of letter. Your note—the unanswered one—reached me just at the right moment, when I needed it much, and it did me a world of good, by giving me a feeling of nearness to you, just at a time when my loneliness was weighing heavily upon me. Heaven reward you! And now, as without a beginning, so without an end, your faithful KLINGEMANN.

Felix to Rebecca.

London: May 18, 1844.

This letter goes from Klingemann's fireside all the way to greet you at Naples. A good fire is burning on the hearth, for it is bitterly cold, and we were quite chilly—a complaint you will hardly understand when you receive this. May we soon meet in the sunshine, or, if that cannot be managed, in the cold north wind! That is my chief reason for writing, for you said, in your last to Fanny, that you would meet us on the Rhine, or perhaps at the Zweibrücken musical festival, and I want to do all in my power to persuade you to adhere to this delightful plan. Pray do not let anything interfere with it; it would be so delightful if our first meeting took place on the Rhine, and soon! Oh, *how* delightful it would be! But I need not say another word about it—you know it all! So I will end by repeating, 'Do come!'

You will have heard from Berlin that we have had all sorts of troubles to contend with; so our news will scarcely harmonise with your blue sky, sunshine, and rippling water. Cécile was taken very unwell indeed at Leipzig, chiefly, I suppose, from exhaustion after the long and trying winter, with the whooping-cough and the cares it involved. The children were not quite recovered, and Clarus talked of Ems and Schwalbach for Cécile, but the Frankfort doctor did not advise either, and prescribed nothing but good country air and perfect rest, whereupon we engaged a nice house two leagues from Frankfort, where Cécile was to go with her mother and the children. Yesterday she wrote me word that our fat little Paul has the measles, and so they will all probably take them, and it is quite uncertain when Cécile may move into the country. I had been counting the days till then, because I expected so much from the fine air, and now, instead of being relieved from the old cares, fresh ones are springing up. It was a bad cough, nervous, dry, and trying to a degree, and great weakness that Cécile suffered from at Leipzig, and I believe we must take it very seriously in hand, lest worse should be in store. Thank God, she was already much better when I left Frankfort, and with proper care and

attention I need not, please God, be uneasy either for the present or for the future. But great care is undoubtedly necessary, and, as you may imagine, I do all in my power to see that she has it.

Under these circumstances my present visit here cannot, of course, be compared to the last, when Cécile was with me, and enjoyed it so, and everything seemed so bright. But the kindness of my friends is so great, and the way in which the musical public receive me so very sympathetic, and the object of my coming—to be of use in the Philharmonic concerts—is being so completely realised, that I am sure I shall look back to it with pleasure when once I am home again and have seen wife and children well. You know that I am Klingemann's guest. He is going to add a postscript, and I am trying to persuade him to come with me to Germany in July. Have you heard that, though travelling from Cologne to Ostend in one day, I had time at Aix-la-Chapelle to call on Mr. Meyer, meaning to ask after Mama Dirichlet; when, lo and behold! there was the Mama herself at breakfast, looking so charmingly well and young that I was thoroughly delighted, and we embraced each other heartily! She must indeed be included in the Rhenish family-meeting, and play a prominent part too. My love to Dirichlet (I shook hands with Mr. Babbage yesterday) and Walter (he must eat *maniche di Cortello* and all kinds of *frutti di mar*); my love to Ernst, also to Pausilippo and Amalfi.

Postscript by Klingemann.

Ah! if you could but know, still youngest of all my friends, how often when turning a longing eye back to the most beautiful time of my youth I have thought of writing to you, writing a real letter, you would forgive me, and I should have the less hesitation in figuring here as a fragmentary appendix. But fate is in fault for not allowing me to see you for the last sixteen years. I have been more lucky with the others, as this appendix proves, and I am indebted to London for a great deal of Felix, who from time to time, and always at the right moment, sends a delightful breeze of recollections ruffling my hair—which is getting gray—and in every way does me more good than I can

express. Why do not you come over like a gentle zephyr? You would find something here to suit you, for it is not all Babbage and 'Rule Britannia,' and you would enjoy yourself, I am certain. Felix fortunately feels the spell as well as exercises it. Although his wife is not with him, and we miss her sorely, he looks well and cheerful, and enjoys the lobster and the pies and the English ladies, and is just as much astonished as ever at the number of Englishmen he meets, and the amount of English he hears spoken, and is altogether in good spirits. If he does not compose the finest works, it is only because of the incessant bustle, for such a 'lion' has no time to himself except early in the morning and late at night. Those hours I have him entirely, and we lead the life of common human beings, and talk of our friends. I profit most, of course. As an artist, no stranger ever held the position here that Felix does; his strong, calm disposition elevates him far above all the smoke and hubbub, and even the Philistines feel this and respect and appreciate, each in his own way, the power all acknowledge. We, John Bulls though we be, are altogether more childlike and candid in this respect than the scribbling Continent. Shrewder too than your lazy maccaroni-eaters, we possess the organ of veneration, and can admire honestly and gladly. What a pity it is you are not present at Felix's receptions! It would delight your sisterly heart, for it does good even to a poor outsider. The first Philharmonic concert he conducted was a striking instance of this. Both orchestra and audience were inspired with new life; they played his symphony in A minor more beautifully than it has ever been played before, and everybody listened with a closer attention, and applauded more vehemently than ever. I do not wish everybody to understand my Felix as well as I and some others do. The crowd, though they may admire the prophet and magician, and find themselves unconsciously attracted towards him, never can appreciate to the fullest extent a really noble and elevated character. My paper is full; but I acknowledge that I still owe you a letter, as you owe me a meeting, and an opportunity of at last making Dirichlet's acquaintance, and seeing for myself the kind of life you lead. Where will that be, and when? Felix speaks of the Rhine. May it be so!

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: May 23, 1844.

. . . I wonder what you will have to say of Naples! Think of me when Vesuvius is glowing in the setting sun, then gradually fading to a rose-pink, then ashy-gray, and then dying out altogether. I am afraid much of the charm of Sta. Lucia will be lost through the improvements they have made; they were talking then of turning out the *lazzaroni*. It is not likely that I shall see Italy again with the same pleasure I had the first time; for if Hensel and I go, we should have to leave Sebastian behind, and that would be hard. He still persists in his intention of becoming a naturalist, and has an alarming hankering after distant regions. He speaks of New Holland as if it were Potsdam. What shall I, poor mother, do, if these plans are ever realised! My hen with her six chickens is far better off. How clean a little bird is on its arrival in the world, and how clever the animals are as soon as they are born! Is there not a good deal we human creatures might learn from them?

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: June 3, 1844.

'Bravo, my little Rebecca! How glad I am you show such a spirit of enterprise!' I exclaimed when I saw the date of your letter; and so did Hensel. But you will be amused to hear that at the same time I congratulated myself that my laziness and my balcony had kept me in Naples, so that, please God, a visit to Sicily is still in store for me when I have passed my fortieth year. For the thirties, Italy has given me enough. I call you very unjust to Naples, the beauty of which is so great that nothing in the world can equal it in some points. Vesuvius, the islands, Pompeii, what can be compared to those overpowering scenes, not to mention the blue grotto, which was not at home the morning we went to pay our respects?

Meanwhile we have been eating dinners and taking part in solemnities in honour of various great men living and dead. I believe I told you the other day that a farewell ceremony of

some kind was being prepared for Devrient. The great R. pictured to himself that this festival would induce Devrient to come back and establish himself here for all future time (I wish I had as thorough a belief in my own ideas and undertakings), but his arrangements were so unspeakably foolish that, if he had been allowed to manage the affair as he liked, the artistic world of Berlin would have been scratching one another's eyes out for six months to come. Hensel's good sense prevailed, however, and at last the *fête* was reduced to the presentation of a beautiful china vase, with the names of the donors on the pedestal. On Wednesday Devrient made his last appearance, as Tasso. After the theatre his friends (exclusive of actors) assembled in the Hôtel de Russie, where he stayed for the last few days, and the vase was presented to him with an introductory speech by Werder, who broke down in the middle. Then followed a 'frugal repast,' the superintendence of which R. had managed to secure, and in consequence the champagne 'at the general expense' flowed in such abundance that I dread to see the bill, which is still hanging over our heads like the sword of Damocles. Devrient was very happy. On the following day the actors gave him a dinner and another present, so his last two days here were very pleasant. The day before yesterday it was Thorwaldsen's turn, and on this occasion a series of the most preposterous blunders was committed. The hall of the Academy was beautifully decorated, with a colossal statue of Thorwaldsen, cleverly modelled by Kiss, in the centre, and the whole really looked very fine. A speech from my handsome friend Reumont, an animated dithyrambus from the great Rungenhagen, and a cantata by Kopisch and Taubert, much in the style of 'Antigone,' were the main features of the solemnity. The point of it was that *by mistake* the king and court were not invited! Imagine the dismay of the artistic world of Berlin. Among others who had also been forgotten, I have only heard as yet the names of Beuth and Humboldt. What do you think of all this? Fancy the horror of the stewards when not a mouse, not even a chamberlain, appeared in the royal box, and they thus became acquainted with what they had done! The painters happening to dine with us afterwards, I let out a bit against Wach

and the others, laughing at them mercilessly, while they were more inclined to cry. But I really could not help it; they deserved to be lashed. Why need they make such a fuss about getting up a Thorwaldsen celebration at all, if they cannot avoid making such clumsy mistakes?

I have no very recent news of Cécile; by the last the three other children (Paul was well again), the mother, aunt, and eighteen members of the family altogether were down with measles. Cécile has had another attack of inflammation of the throat: it was better again, but I confess that altogether I am much more uneasy about her than Felix is. God grant that I may be mistaken, and over-anxious! Of Felix we have very good news. He is happy, delighted with the enthusiastic reception he meets with in London, which cannot fail, however, to make him feel more the coldness of the people here. It is a great contrast. Cécile has not told him about her own illness, and forbids me to do so either.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Naples, Villa di Roma: May 31, 1844.

Your balcony desires to be remembered to you. Unfortunately I am not inhabiting it, as the apartments are under repair, but I have just paid it an evening visit and given your love to the three fishing boats and the full moon on the sea. Again I am copying you, dear Fanny, for I am here in a state of temporary widowhood. Our plan of making excursions in Sicily with the children proved impossible, for I could neither ride nor go in a *lettiga*, nor by steamer, for fear of seasickness. I even had to give up Cefalù, because I had to choose between a ride of six German miles and a sail in a small boat. I am not sorry for it, as nothing can be superior to Palermo: but Dirichlet had been looking forward so eagerly to Etna and the tomb of Archimedes, that I almost forced him not to give up the chance of so many pleasant recollections, and came back here by the large steamer *Palermo* with some people we had made acquaintance with. I was afraid of the heat and of the small mail steamers, which are said to be very bad, but it was with a heavy heart that I left that most poetic spot, Palermo,

and established myself in the Villa di Roma. I saw everything in the neighbourhood of Palermo: Monte Pellegrino, with Goethe's chapel of Sta. Rosalia, where, like him, I heard the organ and the singing; Monreale—did Hensel take the bridle path from S. Marino to Monreale? it is worth seeing—Baggaria, where we went to see the Duca di Serra di Falio, and several times a day to the *marina*. Oh! how beautiful, how poetic, and how Moorish it all is! And how good the hotel was, and the strawberries, and the *nespole japanese*! Neither must we forget the Ziza with its Moorish halls, and its view celebrated in history. I wish I were there still, for I feel rather solitary here, and the time passes very slowly without Dirichlet. At Palermo I had Don Romeo. I can scarcely believe that you do not know Don Romeo, for we are always talking about him. He is Schapse and cousin Wolf rolled into one, only, as his name shows, translated into a Palermitan, which is equivalent to saying young and handsome. Like cousin Wolf, he has a small income, and a great display of white linen, and is very polite on all occasions; like Schapse, he knows everything and gets everybody what they want. He was introduced to us by an officer for whom Dirichlet had a letter, and he has scarcely left us since, arranging our excursions, making the *patto* with the coachmen and boatmen, buying sewing silk for me, sewing on buttons for Dirichlet, and altogether proving himself a *vero amico*. But I am very tired, so good-night! The day after to-morrow I will tell you more about Romeo; to-morrow I am going to Sorrento to visit the Nerenzens.

June 5.—Evviva!!! The shape of these notes of exclamation will show that my ejaculation is intended for Paul's little daughter. *Evviva!* What a load off my mind! I wish I were with you, and able to go and see the new mother! On such occasions not even Vesuvius and the sea can make up for the lack of personal intercourse. A thousand good wishes to the father, mother, and child! On the 24th we drank their health at the foot of Monte Pellegrino, and I thought the event must be near, but by that time it was already over.

I am dating this letter from Sorrento, as you predicted, dear Fanny, but there is one great drawback. I made use of

the moment when Dirichlet was absent, and myself an absolute stranger in Naples, to fall seriously ill just after I had written to you the other day. When Dr. Zimmermann had watched the case for a while, he peremptorily ordered me to go at once to Sorrento, where I have now been staying for several days, and can report myself pretty well again. I hear that I am not the first who has had a nervous illness at Naples and recovered at Sorrento. I have established myself in very pretty apartments here, and shall keep perfectly quiet till Dirichlet's return, which will be in a few days. My stay here rather interferes with our further plans, but it does not much matter where one is in this neighbourhood, it is all so beautiful and charming, and the air of Sorrento is so balmy and refreshing. The sea-sickness had a good deal to do with my recent illness, for we had a stormy passage and I suffered terribly, but it is all over now. Walter has shown this time all the sense of a grown-up man, and all the loving ways of a child.

Again I maintain that never were the lights so full of colour as to-day. When I step into our portico, and look out through the arches at the sea, I feel a longing for paints, that I might daub in a blue sea, a green foreground, white arches, and a lilac Vesuvius. Would it not be a lovely picture? It would really be possible to fancy oneself a landscape-painter in Italy from constantly looking at the exquisite views; then criticising Walter's drawings makes me observe more. Ah! I cannot put up much longer with writing. I do look forward so to being together again. We two have never been at a loss for topics of conversation, but now we shall not know where to stop. I am forgetting my Italian, picked up with so much effort, here in Sorrento, so I am conscientiously reading the 'Gerusalemme Liberata,' and get on pretty well with it. Is it not strange how sometimes we see suddenly a new meaning in what we read? It happened so to me in Rome the other day with Goethe's 'Tasso,' which struck me in quite a new light, and since then few days have passed without my reading a scene or two from it with deep emotion. Those who are unable to produce anything of their own learn in this land of wonders to understand the works of others. In a country where the very trees and

hedges are full of poetry, the mind cannot fail to imbibe a trace or two of it.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Sorrento: June 19, 1844.

My dear Fanny,—Your last letter lies before me, reproaching me with my sins: first, in not having written to you for so long, in spite of the friendly welcome you give my letters; and secondly, in having wronged poor Naples so much. The first burden I can discharge at once, and the second—but why did our luck turn at Naples? Why did I fall ill there? and why was I so abominably cheated at the Villa di Roma, which has changed its *padrone*? Why were there at the most only four days out of fourteen on which we could get out? Why does the climate not suit me? And, above all, why does it lie between Rome and Palermo? Besides, you have bewitched us. One day I get your letter saying how smoothly everything is going with us, how fortunate we are in having no illness, etc., and the next I am in bed. Another time you write how well we have arranged everything, and, lo! we had just made two great mistakes, first in separating, and then in leaving Palermo, where we were living like the gods in Italy. From these philosophical remarks you will perceive that I have not much to relate. In fact we are living very quietly; in the afternoon we sit out on the terrace, which has the prettiest view in all Sorrento, watch the sun set behind Cape Miseno, feel that we can no longer enjoy ourselves as we did, and yet groan at leaving Italy in a fortnight. And thus Italy is fading slowly away. The winter in Rome was a real Indian summer for me; when you see me again you will wonder how I could have been so full of fun, for I have grown very old in appearance, and my hair is getting quite gray.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: June 19, 1844.

My dear Rebecca,—What a fright the news of your illness has given me. You began in such spirits, and your letters have been so full of all that is pleasant and delightful, that I was really

not prepared for any bad tidings. I am sure no anxiety is necessary to make me fully conscious that you are the charm of my life; I am perfectly aware of that fact when you are quite well, so you must never be ill again. Perhaps, after all, the voyage to Sicily was rather too much for you.

A few days ago we had a great treat in the arrival of Jakoby, who gives us such a minute and delightful account of you all, and can answer our questions at once, which is more than the best of letters can do. It gave me quite a foretaste of your return. I should think that now, having had the best part of it, you will be beginning to feel tired of travelling, and be longing for home again. 'We turn from all the charms the world presents us.' Jakoby made good use of his eyes and all his faculties out there, as might be expected of so eminent a man. He is well and in good spirits.

Next Sunday I shall have my last music of the summer, and mean to conclude with Felix's part-song for men's voices, 'Wer hat dich, du schöner Wald,' with horns and trombones. We have excellent news of Felix, as you will believe when I tell you that he has ordered a large *Baumkuchen* to be sent to him in London. The 'Midsummer-night's Dream' music has been performed with great success in London, and the 'Antigone' in Paris, both of which compositions are now shelved in Berlin. However, they are rehearsing 'Athalie,' with Felix's music. In this kind of play they have to find some one to take Devrient's parts, and the choice will probably fall on Hendrichs, a young actor whom Berlin and Hamburg are both striving for.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Sorrento: June 30, 1844.

Dear Fanny,—With many blushes, I seize my pen to make the confession—that we stay on here for another month! I have begun sea-bathing, and it suits me admirably, in spite of my having tried it with the greatest unwillingness. After many *pros* and *cons*—for I had the musical festival very much at heart—we have taken airy lodgings, and mean to remain through July. It is divinely beautiful here, and yet, I know not why, all my delight in travelling is gone, and I have a horrid longing for

you and the others. It is very odd about Naples—beautiful as it is, it is less *simpatica* to me than anything else I have seen in Italy, and now we shall be kept so long in the neighbourhood and yet leave the chief sights unseen; the heat makes it quite impossible to go anywhere, for the themometer is at 95° here to-day, and in Naples 102°. And yet, except for a couple of hours about noon, it is not oppressive; the mornings and evenings are cool and fresh, and our bathe among the great rocks most invigorating, besides the Arcadian simplicity of our arrangements, for we undress on the shore and run in and out of the water, in full view of all the fishing boats; but the sparkle and the warmth of the water are indescribable. Homer becomes for the first time a reality, in this land of grottoes and sacred groves. At Meta, close to Sorrento, stand two ancient olives; the identical trees, so they say, under which Ulysses made his bed when he visited the land of the Phenicians. Others suppose Sicily to have been the Island of the Blest.

You must find a great difference between my letters from Rome and those from here, which contain nothing; but you would not believe how worried I am with all this travelling, and stopping, bathing, and lingering. This uncertainty, too, about our immediate future preoccupies me, and now there will be the removal, then the time till one has got a little settled, then the packing up again, then two worrying days of sight-seeing in Naples, and then the great journey—it all weighs heavily upon me.

The children are in a great state of delight, only Walter has his grievance, which is that he must *not* bathe on account of the inflamed eyes he got from a trip to the blue grotto, while Ernst is equally disgusted to find that he *must*, and screams every morning as if he were being murdered. So it is, mankind is never content. What would not I have given in Berlin to be spending a summer with my dear ones in Sorrento, and now that I am here I am longing for home again with all my might. And when I am in Berlin, how I shall miss not returning to the old house again! L. was quite right in saying he would 'express his d—d feelings on that confounded instrument.' You

[1] A Berlin cake looking like a piece of the trunk of a tree.

happy musicians can turn your despondencies into songs without words for the pleasure of others, while I am condemned to wretched prose *with* words, and after all shall only be laughed at and called ungrateful for the fate which, after many years of worries and cares, gives me a short period of health, in which I have nothing to do but amuse myself.

Rebecca to Fanny.

Sorrento, Villa Grande Guerracina: July 6.

My love and birthday-congratulations to the fifty-year-old.[1] If I ever longed for you here, it is now. Fancy we four Dirichlets are occupying lodgings about as large as Felix's house in Berlin, with a *salon* in which fifty couples might dance, and nine rooms all in proportion; a portico with arcades runs along the whole set, ending in a covered *loggia*, which latter would in itself make the rest of the rooms superfluous, for I have had a sofa, table, and chairs placed in it, and there we eat, drink, sleep, have lessons, receive visitors (if there were any), and dry our linen—at this moment Dirichlet's bathing-towel is hanging in the sun. To make it complete, we ought also to bathe in the *loggia*; but all we have to do is to walk a short distance, and then descend a hundred feet through a series of grottoes which might be the abode of nymphs, undress in space, and then offer a charming spectacle to the fishermen's barques. From each of the arcades there is a view! I tell you I feel myself unworthy of it, and only wish I could send for you by telegraph and put you into my three spare beds. From one of these unoccupied rooms a door leads to the upper garden. There is nothing in it but vines and lemon-trees, but the children play at ball with the fallen lemons, and our lemonade is plucked straight from the tree so to speak. Besides these and the grapes, the gardens furnish us with other classical fruits, an elegantly arranged dish of which our old *padrone* brings us in every morning, with the comforting assurance that the figs are getting better every day. He is my first experience of a *padrone di casa*, and acts quite like a father to us. There are also

[1] Wilhelm Hensel.

cows and poultry belonging to the house, so our eggs and milk are fresh. A private door leads from the gardens on to the hill, and from the summit you see the gulfs both of Naples and of Sorrento; the path too is quite different from most here, as instead of running between walls on each side, it commands a fine view of the sea, and of the whole 'piano di Sorrento' (I wish I could see it from the house), now almost smothered in foliage, and goes for part of the way through a shady cool wood of chestnut-trees. Altogether you cannot imagine what an idyllic life we are leading. Moreover, the house stands high, so we get most refreshing whiffs of *fritto misto* from the sea and the mountains, and it is so little hot that I have added one more garment to my very scanty attire. And now we are expecting Herr Kestner in his purple velvet dressing-gown, for he will have Dirichlet sit for his portrait. What more could heart desire? I am at present engaged—fit employment for the occupant of such princely apartments—in knitting silk stockings for Walter, having hunted in vain for knitting-cotton in Naples the other day, and in darning our linen (fancy with Vesuvius staring one in the face!), which shows considerable wear and tear from the whole year of travelling, which came to an end yesterday. I am also reading Boccaccio, Goethe, Homer, and the Swiss Family Robinson, for when the day begins at six o'clock it seems to last quite twenty-six hours. At night we can never make up our minds to go to bed, for if it is clear we can see Naples with its lights looking like a diamond crown stretching all the way to Posilippo, and over the whole *piano* the little lights twinkle right up the hills till they meet the stars. The light of day is, I am sorry to say, so very brilliant that Walter still suffers from his eye, and has to do his lessons with Dirichlet by ear only. On his birthday he had a delightful donkey-ride with the Nerenz children, and a feast of cakes and apricots, and we gave him some prints of Neapolitan scenes, which you will find very amusing, and an olive-wood paint-box. The people about here are very clever at cabinet-making and gardening; their other means of livelihood are silk-culture, cheating, and raw cucumbers.

But a truce to nonsense! I had a letter the other day from August Elsasser, who is in raptures at Paul's having bought his

picture, and begs me to express his thanks to Paul for the generous way in which he has made him 'happy,' and at the same time apologise for his not being able to send the picture at once, as he is going to copy it for the King of Würtemberg. He has, however, made Kaselowsky certify on the back that Paul's is the original. Is not that like Elsasser? I cannot tell you how glad I am, and how much I thank Paul for procuring this wonderful painting for himself and all of us. Elsasser intends writing to Paul himself, but please inform him beforehand that he cannot spell, any more than he can speak, correctly; but I will not allow any one to laugh at his mistakes. Perhaps, however, Julius Elsasser, who was at Arricia making studies, will help him. Once upon a time we too made plans for going to Arricia and Frascati, but now, *pauvres hommes*, we must put up with Sorrento.

Please direct your next to Zurich, *poste restante*. The idea of giving up that other bundle of hay, the musical festival at Zweibrücken, is more than this poor donkey can swallow. Italy, however, has its merits, and who knows whether we shall ever see it again while we are as young as we are now, or even when we are old, for that matter! We do, indeed, talk of another visit four years hence!

Felix to Rebecca.

Soden, near Frankfort-on-the-Maine: July 22, 1844.

(With a vignette by Cécile.) Here are some wild flowers from the Taunus, painted for you from nature by Cécile. We have neither oranges nor lemons here, but plenty of flowers such as these, and if you do not believe it come and see. That is the object of my letter. It would be too delightful if we were to meet here, and now I do not consider it at all improbable. The quiet days and rich fruitful country are quite charming, and I shall stay on as long as possible. If we could finish up with your arrival, we should have a real bouquet, in every sense of the word. Perhaps you will hardly be able to appreciate this scenery after Palermo and Sorrento, but that is not a feeling we should encourage. Those who have a true

feeling for beauty of one kind, and derive rest and pleasure from it, cannot, I am sure, circumscribe their powers of enjoyment, but will, on the contrary, endeavour to widen them as much as possible, so as to take in all genuine beauty. I never can bear to hear people able to appreciate Beethoven only, or Palestrina only, or, again, Mozart or Bach only. Give me all four, or none at all. The upshot of which is, that you must and shall like the footpath from Soden to Altenhain. Plenty of real chestnuts and walnuts—you have been having better ones though—oaks at least one thousand years old, cornfields and blackberries—these are better here—and the Rhine and the Maine in the background; and oh! such apple- and pear-trees. Palms we have not, but uncommonly good puddings and dumplings instead. If you think little of these, ask Walter, and he will side with the Germans, I know. On the other hand, Vesuvius, I must own, has greater attractions than the Zweibrücken musical festival. Breiting will probably be one of the singers, but whether he is in as good a state of preservation as Pompeii, I am doubtful. The confectioner here deals in shirt-buttons; the policeman is our cook's husband; in the church at Neuenheim they have Roman Catholic service at eight, and the Protestant at nine; we are only two hours' walk from the Feldberg; there are many donkeys, also a duchess. Hoffmann von Fallersleben is living opposite our house; Freiligrath is at Kronthal, and Lenau at Frankfort; all points of attraction for Dirichlet, provided he still bear a German heart in his bosom (a phrase that quite irritates Cécile, 'there is something so supercilious about it,' she says). She has quite recovered from her illness, and got back her own healthy looks; the children, too, look splendidly brown. After my mad, most mad, life in England—for never before was anything like this season—we never went to bed before half past one, every hour of every day was filled with engagements three weeks beforehand, and I got through more music in two months than in all the rest of the year—this life at Soden, with its eating and sleeping, without dress-coat, without piano, without visiting-cards, without carriage and horses, but with donkeys, with wild flowers, with music-paper and sketch-book, with Cécile and the children, is doubly refreshing.

Our last news of the Pauls and Fanny was very good too. What a pleasure Paul's little girl is to us all! I lay a wager that the child will have brothers and sisters, and we more nephews and nieces, but I will confer with Dirichlet on the point. Mr. Babbage gave me for the latter a pamphlet giving an account of his calculating machine, which I have brought to Soden. He gives such evening parties, frequented by all the celebrities—Indian princes, Baron Gerlach, the beauties of the season, Lord Ossulstone, and myself. Is this a letter fit to send to Milan and the Sposalizio? No, but it shall go to the *poste restante* for your private reading, and may it find you well and happy. Our best love to you all, and do come and see us on the Taunus hills, or at Frankfort (which is only an hour from here), since Zweibrücken must be given up. She can never come to an end, but I must.—Yours,

FELIX.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: July 29, 1844.

To-day I received your welcome letter of the 12th, which is full, however, of all those things after which the Gentiles do seek. What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed? So I have two letters to answer, especially that very charming one which you sent for Hensel's birthday. I am very glad that I had already executed most of your commissions out of my own head, as I shall presently report, but first I must inform you that I think it is a great shame you do not intend to come back before the end of September! Where, for goodness' sake, do you mean to be roving about all that time? I thought when once you had left Rome you would be seized with a longing for the beloved fatherland, but it seems no such thing. Your sea-bathing I highly approve of. A musical festival in Germany you can have every year, but not so a bathe in the sea at Sorrento. Hensel to this day waxes enthusiastic on the subject, and maintains that he never saw the human body look so ethereal as in those grottoes, and yet the only human body he saw was that of Kopisch, his fellow-traveller. I have always forgotten to tell you what perhaps

you have seen already in the *Allgemeine* of Augsburg, that the 'Antigone' is being performed in Paris with increasing applause, and even in the provincial towns of France. Next we are to have one of the 'Trilogies of Æschylus,' at least so says Bunsen, but I am such a thorough modern as to prefer Sophocles to Æschylus ten times over; the latter makes me shudder.

If you are obliged to keep indoors during the hottest time of the day, I suppose you will most probably return by land, which I should be very glad of, as I dread the sea for you. But in that case you will come home without stopping anywhere on the road, will you not?

Rebecca to Fanny.

Sorrento, August 3: on the move.

I believe you are something of a prophetess, dearest Fanny, for who could have told you that a sail to Capri the other day made me so wretched for days after that we have decided on giving up the voyage, and being roasted over a slow fire on *terra firma* instead? But we are in a fine predicament, for, never doubting but that we should return by sea, we sold our somewhat rickety carriage at Naples for a hundred and twenty ducati, and so shall have to find our way as best we can from Constantinople to Adrianople, and on to Berlin. It is not, however, so very bad after all, for Angrisani's successor, Parete, a kind of arrangement *à deux mains* for either post-horses or *vetturino*, will furnish us, at a slightly higher rate than the others, with good carriages and horses, and provide them with food from one end of Italy to the other; while as for Germany, in this one year it has become almost like a patch-work counterpane for railways. Turning one's back upon Italy can under no circumstances be a pleasant journey, and I wish we could take one jump right over Northern Italy, Switzerland, and the Rhine, and find ourselves at home with you.

Rome I actually dread to see again, and would gladly skip it if possible. I saw about the 'Antigone' in Paris in the *Allgemeine*, and also in some odd numbers of the *Staatszei-*

tung, which have found their way here. Did I not tell you in one of my letters from Rome about its first *début* in Paris, which took place in Henri Lehmann's studio, under Julius Stern's direction? Lehmann went to the expense of thirty-six thalers for the hire of plants to decorate his studio with, and invited half Paris, before whom the 'Antigone' was performed. His brother[1] told me all about it at the time. It is said to have been a most brilliant affair, according to the *Allgemeine*. Bunsen has reduced the 'Trilogy of Æschylus' to the dimensions of a single play, and added as a conclusion the 'Prussian Royal Liturgy.' Your wretched summer makes me feel sorry for you; even here the Neapolitans declare that it is so cold they cannot get warm in their beds, and they have given up bathing, so you may imagine how well it suits the *forestieri*, or *Ingresi*.[2]

Rome, 12*th*.—I brought this letter on with me here, for I found it impossible to write in Naples, as the climate, or the town, exercised its old spells, and made me so miserable that I could neither go out nor do anything whatever. So I have been three times in Naples without once seeing the museum or buying a scrap of coral or lava. Thank goodness I have now turned my back upon it! We drove here with post-horses in two days, and suffered very little from the heat, as there was always a breath of air in the marshes. We saw the green and yellow poisonous vapours rising from the ground, and at Velletri we encountered a violent storm of rain, the first for two months, which we hailed with delight, and which marvellously refreshed the Campagna and the hill-country. The Lateran greeted us in the glow of a splendid sunset, and we agreed that nothing in the world could be more beautiful. Kaselowsky came to meet us half-way to Albano, and has got us a lodging exactly opposite our former quarters, so we are on the shady side. In our apartments we found Moser, who had been waiting for us ever since noon, but otherwise we are travelling incognito, as there is not a soul here. But what do I hear, that you have been shooting at the sovereign? Is *this* your latest

[1] Rudolph Lehmann, the well-known artist in London.

[2] Neapolitan for *Inglesi*.

trick? It has quite gone out of fashion in France and England. *Addio!* Soon to meet face to face!

Rebecca to Fanny.

Motto: 'Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs.'

Rome: August 22.

The motto does not strictly apply to me, for I am indeed black in my mind, and that because I am yellow, not only in my legs but also in my arms, face, eyes—in short, all over my body. I will cut it short and tell you in one word, that, by way of summing up our pleasant recollections of Naples, I managed to pick up there a fine full-grown jaundice, which compels us, very much against the grain, to stay on here, for yesterday the faculty, Alerz and Caspar, were at last induced to give their verdict, which was that I must not think of travelling for another fortnight. I hope to goodness I may be fit for it then, for ever since we left Palermo I have had a burning desire to be at home. I did not know before that the jaundice—setting aside its cosmetic effects, which I am likely to bring home unimpaired, as they are said to leave their traces for a long time—is such a very disagreeable and painful disease. You would never believe what I suffered that last fortnight in Sorrento, but I am feeling a little better since the day before yesterday, owing, as Minna maintains, to a sympathetic remedy applied by herself and the landlady, but what it is I am not to know. We are, however, lucky in being here among our friends, and in a quiet house where they can cook my little bit of food—little I say advisedly, for cold water is my chief article of diet, which is a pity, when I was so nice and plump! Now they are all showing themselves wise after the event! Alerz assures me that if I had consulted him before going to Naples he would have forbidden it, and Caspar himself came back in a pitiable condition from Castellamare; indeed, he made me laugh yesterday in spite of my misery, by giving me a full, true, and particular description of my feelings from his own experience of this horrible complaint. I cannot go out at all, and am least uncomfortable when lying full length

on the sofa. What a way to spend one's time in the Eternal City! All of a sudden yesterday I remembered with dismay that when we got home it would be too late for pickling beans, and I really do not know how I shall feed Grandmamma Dirichlet without them. If there is still time, *do* sacrifice Minna and Sophie for one day, and let them do a bushel. The pots and pans, cloths, etc., you will find among my kitchen *roba*. We shall now scarcely reach Berlin before the end of October, but, oh dear! it *is* hard that we should have such a miserable ending to our delightful tour.

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: September 4, 1844.

I always thought you were much too original to be imitating us in everything as you are doing, even to the extent of coming home *à la limonade*, as poor Sebastian did. You poor child! How sorry I am for you, and what a pity that your return should be again delayed! But I cannot understand why you should add six weeks to your calculations, nor why the doctors should want you to stop on for a fortnight after the illness is over. I think I have heard that after the total failure of appetite which always occurs during jaundice, it returns with redoubled vigour, so I hope you will regain flesh as you are able to eat more. You must not mind a slightly deeper tinge in your epidermis—we will set it all down to the southern climate. From this point your path will be strewed with old, faded letters. At Zurich I propose to you to let mamma return with Minna, who is on the Rhine; at Mayence you will learn that I have found a capital nursery governess for little Ernst, in the shape of a nice Swiss man-servant; at Freiburg news is waiting for you at the Woringens'; and in Milan you will find a letter written, if I mistake not, at the time when printing was first invented, and containing the current intelligence, which I have forgotten. Another point of comparison between our two journeys is, that the powers of Europe are again making faces at each other, and England is singing once more, 'They shall not have it ever. The free and German;'—but no, Tangiers does

not belong to Germany, and England does not sing *a capella*, but with an accompaniment of thundering men-of-war. Heaven grant they may come to terms before it be too late! But the affair looks more threatening than ever. Oh, if only you were back again—it does seem so long to me! Your nicely polished furniture will have lost its gloss, and the flies will have spotted your clean chintz, and the view from your window, now so green and bright, will look dusty and faded if you go on delaying for ever and ever.

Yesterday the exhibition was opened, and this time the old *perruques* of senators, whose business it is to 'hang,' reject—or, as one might put it, bring the pictures to the scaffold—have had a couple of younger members added to them, who, like true fifth wheels, have only dragged the cart a little deeper in the old ruts. Hensel was put on the committee, but he declined to act, to my great satisfaction, for, vexed as he already is, and justly so, at their way of hanging the pictures, it would be ten thousand times worse if he had to contend for days with these leathern puppets stuffed with horse-hair, who go by the name of 'artists.' His honesty would not allow him to rest contented like the said leather gentlemen with providing for himself and his belongings, but he would fight tooth and nail for each one of his brother artists. Riedel's picture is about the best, then a charming little landscape by Elsasser, but several have not yet arrived. As you will most likely be burning to see all the sights of Berlin the moment you arrive, it is lucky that we shall have two exhibitions. The Industrial Exhibition is very amusing, very praiseworthy, and will most likely produce a great stir in trade; it is said to have brought a host of visitors to Berlin already, and most of the foreign governments, newspapers, etc., have sent reporters. Above 20,000 tickets have been sold already for the lottery which the committee is organising, the prizes for which are to be objects purchased by the exhibition. With all this it is almost an extempore affair, for the first official announcements ran much in this way: 'We intend to open an exhibition, but all contributors may expect a slap in the face.' The regulations were framed in the same inviting style, but when they found that no one could be

induced to send anything they began to mend. If we ever have another affair of the kind properly carried out it would certainly be a splendid success. The flower-show, which took place during the same time, though nothing very out of the way, was attended by from 12,000 to 14,000 persons. Berlin is really becoming a large town!

The Wilhelmsplatz is just like an enormous twelfth-cake, horribly stiff and regular, but the gravel walks are firm and good, and that is not only something, but much. In fact Germany is just now very flourishing, but its political condition is miserable. This fellow Eichhorn seems resolved to stifle all freedom of thought, and if so much as a mouse stirs he flies into a panic. What a rickety concern the State of Prussia must be, if it is really in danger the moment three students form themselves into a union, or three professors publish a periodical! But after all Eichhorn is only a tool in the hands of others, and those, alas! must be looked for in much higher quarters. The never-ending prohibitions, the meddling with everything, the system of constant *espionage*, carried on in the midst of peace and in spite of the quiet disposition of the nation, has now reached a climax which is perfectly intolerable.

We must set aside the correspondence for a while, in order to relate events not touched upon in the letters. Mendelssohn's relations with Berlin came in the autumn of 1844 to the crisis which he himself had foreseen in the spring. Probably he was then firmly resolved not to return for a permanency, which would account for Cécile and the children leaving Berlin, which Fanny repeatedly laments over, both in her letters and diary, as a very stupid arrangement, and which, indeed, would have appeared strange if the family were to return in autumn. During the winter of 1843 and 1844 Mendelssohn had come to the absolute conviction that there was no lasting sphere of work for him in Berlin. His position was too intricate and too confined; he could scarcely turn without coming into collision with one or other of the departments, now with the Singakademie and its conductor, now with the managers of the theatre, now with the ecclesiastical authorities. It became, too, more and

more evident that the difficulties were not mere accidents, but incidental to the artificial nature of the position, that he was hemmed in on all sides by other officials, who had a broader and more definite sphere of action, and that therefore there was no hope that the lapse of time would tend to make matters run smoother, but the contrary, for the more energetically and the more conscientiously he fulfilled his duties, the more opposition would be roused on all sides. Thus he had already made up his mind when he left Berlin not to return for a permanence, which resolve was no doubt strengthened by the warmth and enthusiasm of his reception in England. There he found full scope for each one of his faculties as an artist, and everything was made so easy for him that none of the petty obstacles which made his position in Berlin so trying ever crossed his path. The contrast must have been painful! A correspondence with Bunsen on the subject of the 'Trilogy of Æschylus' confirmed him in his intention [1] by proving to him again, as he says, that his 'stay on such slippery ground under such perplexed circumstances was impossible,' and, as he did not want to be 'an indifferent, doubtful, secretly discontented servant to the king,' the affair must come to an end. With this object he came alone to Berlin on September 30, the announcement of his arrival only preceding him by a few hours, and proposed to the king, as he had done in 1843, to diminish his salary, set him free from definite duties and the obligation of living at Berlin, and give him only separate commissions. To these terms the king agreed, Mendelssohn's salary was fixed at 1,000 thalers, and he was again free to settle wherever he pleased. His choice fell for the present on Frankfort. Fanny remarks in her diary on this occasion: 'When I hear him talk about it I cannot help agreeing with him, for his motives are absolutely noble and worthy of him; but still it is a pity, and very hard for me, who enjoyed the happiness of living near him and his family so intensely. And all the music I was looking forward to! Perhaps we may not see less of Felix himself, though, for if he comes here several times a year, as he says he will, and we have him in the house

[1] Letters, vol. ii. p. 327 of the English edition.

as we have now, we shall certainly see more of him than if he were living here, but obliged to spend most of his time away from home, and be worried during the rest. But Cécile and the children are completely lost to us, and I had grown so fond of them! Felix is again most dear, and his playing, to my mind, finer than ever. How contemptible and trumpery amateurishness looks when one sees what real art is. If I do not give up entirely it is because, for one thing, I do not seem to myself so stupid when Felix is away; and for another, my husband would be so distressed. The recital of the way they all—from the cathedral dignitaries down to the last member of the orchestra—have done all in their power to put a spoke in Felix's wheel (with a few exceptions, though), and the total absence of all the little tokens of respect and sympathy to which he is accustomed elsewhere, would fill a volume.'

Mendelssohn conducted a few more concerts, and finally, at the king's special request, stayed another fortnight to conduct the performance of 'St. Paul.' It was in this fortnight that Hensel took the portrait of Felix known from the engraving; it was originally destined for the Russian Colonel Lvoff, but when it turned out so good a likeness Paul Mendelssohn seized upon it.

Fanny to Cécile.

Berlin: November 19, 1844.

. . . With regard to yourself, dear Cécile, you cannot seriously imagine that I ever reproached *you* for the turn things have taken. I know very well that it could not be helped. That it is a grievous blow to me you could have no doubt, but that is altogether a different matter. The only thing I was not prepared for was the suddenness with which it came to an end, for I was so in hopes that you would be here this winter and occupy your newly furnished house till Easter. The moment I heard from Horchheim that you were not coming with Felix, I saw it all. It is really sad that life should be passing without our being able to enjoy it together, especially after such hopes and prospects. By the present arrangement I shall completely lose sight

of you and the children, and, believe me, I cannot even now think of that without tears, much as it has occupied my mind already; and believe, also, that I love you more than I can express. Moreover, it seems to me that the whole affair is founded on an illusion, and that this vague, indefinite state of things cannot last, so that I should not be surprised if the present experiment were to come to an end as quickly as the former one did. I believe I should find it easier to bear if there were some palpable obstacle, but these mental worries are more insurmountable and harder to understand. The line Felix has taken is reasonable—that we must acknowledge; but I cannot conceive why it would not have been still more reasonable for us to spend our lives together, grow old together, and see our children grow up together. But I suppose it is all for the best, and you at any rate are well off, for you remain for a time with your mother, whose delight at having you I can well understand, and am glad to think of.

I dare say Felix has been groaning to you over the hardship of having to sit to Hensel, but he bears up pretty well under it. Altogether I cannot help admiring the way he keeps up his spirits during his separation from you, and his wonderful sweetness of disposition. I only wish he had not felt obliged to inflict so great a sacrifice upon us all, as well as upon himself.

On November 30 Felix left Berlin, the performance of 'St. Paul' having been a kind of formal farewell. After the general rehearsal some musical friends gave him a pretty serenade, ending with 'Es ist bestimmt in Gottes Rath,' after which, as Fanny writes, 'we had bread and butter, *Baumkuchen* and punch, laughter and floods of tears, all mixed up together.' At the performance the room was crowded in every corner, the whole music-loving population of Berlin being present, and everybody in a state of distress at Mendelssohn's going away, though they had all, or nearly all, contributed to make him go. His departure was hastened by the news that his youngest child, little Felix, who had suffered most from the measles, was dangerously ill at Frankfort. He recovered after a long period of

anxiety, but was never strong, and died young, although after the father's death.

When the first news arrived of Rebecca's illness in Rome, there seemed to be no serious cause for apprehension, but she was much worse than they had any idea of in Berlin. She was suffering from 'black jaundice,' an aggravated form of the disease, generally fatal, and at the same time she was *enceinte*, though the Roman doctors denied the possibility of such a thing, and treated her for jaundice alone, which caused her infinite suffering in the long-run. It was all bearable so long as they were in Rome, with people they knew, and surrounded by friends who mitigated the longing for home; but a most unfortunate complication arose, for Dirichlet had a violent attack of Roman fever, and was ordered immediate change of air. Ill as they were, Kaselowsky packed them up and went with them to Florence, a journey which Rebecca never afterwards spoke of if she could help it (in her letters at the time she hardly alludes to the horrors she had gone through), though she once said, with a shudder, that she had nearly gone out of her mind, and could never tell anybody how much she had suffered.

At Florence they remained, for Dirichlet got worse. Kaselowsky stayed for some weeks, and engaged private lodgings for them, but had to return to Rome after he had seen them settled. During this time Rebecca wrote only short letters, with scarcely any details, and never mentioned her own severe illness, nor her condition, so that for months the family was in ignorance of the real state of things. Meanwhile, as so often happens in such cases, all sorts of contradictory reports, sometimes alarming, sometimes reassuring, reached the members of the family, who were kept in a constant state of suspense. Fanny took great pains to write calm and cheerful letters to Florence, although her diary bears witness to her anxiety; and, to add to the general gloom, Paul's little daughter was taken dangerously ill towards the end of October, and for some days her life was despaired of. Just at the moment of the greatest anxiety about the child a letter arrived from Dirichlet, announcing that owing to his illness they must remain in Italy for the whole winter! Their intimate friends were at once

taken into consultation, with a view more especially to the best way of averting heavy pecuniary sacrifices, and on this occasion Jakoby came forward in the noblest manner, undertaking the chief part of Dirichlet's work, the University and the Kriegsschule, so that at least they should not have a diminished income with which to meet their increased expenses. A very alarming letter from Kaselowsky to Fanny, written immediately after his return to Rome, confirmed the apprehensions she and Hensel had begun to entertain, and decided them to go to Italy and offer their help—a resolve which could only be strengthened by the first authentic news of Rebecca's condition, contained in a letter of Minna's to a friend in Berlin. If this intelligence were really true, there remained no doubt as to what was to be done, so Fanny wrote at once demanding an exact account of the whole state of things, and concluding as follows :—

Now this is the proposal Hensel and I submit to your judgment. Our intention of coming out to you, in case your illnesses make it desirable, is no momentary impulse, but the result of mature consideration, for we have consulted with the brothers, talked it over with the whole family, and spent many days and many sleepless nights in thinking over it. To Hensel the journey would be no loss, but rather the contrary, as he has several Italian pictures on hand, and we all agree that it would not hurt Sebastian, for I am sure Dirichlet would help him on a little with his Latin, and his being confirmed a year later is of no consequence. Now for the chief point: it does not now seem necessary for either of you, thank God, that we should come *immediately*, but if you really intend a confinement, dear Rebecca, you might be glad to have me—at least, so I flatter myself—and if so, please write a line to say as near as you can when you expect to be laid up, so that we may choose the least uncomfortable time for travelling, and yet arrive in time for both the birth and the christening. It will certainly be desirable for you not to hurry home too soon after the event, and when once we have come all that distance we shall like to look about us a *little* (not long), though we must be back again in Berlin at the same time or before you. You see that everything

depends on your giving a precise answer to this letter. But possibly the whole affair is an illusion, and there is no baby in prospect, in which case we may hope that the first breeze of spring will blow you home, hale and hearty, which would certainly be best of all; but one thing is certain, there must be no further reserves, as you can see for yourself, so please tell us the plain truth. If writing is a trouble to you or to Dirichlet, and under the circumstances you cannot employ Walter, make Minna pluck a goose, and then use the quill she handles so cleverly; at any rate, come what will, let me have full particulars. With regard to me, be assured that travelling in winter will be no hardship at all for the sake of seeing you sooner, and perhaps being of use to you; and Hensel thinks just the same, and loves you almost as dearly as I do.

Yesterday, my birthday, was the second Symphony *soirée*, and the last conducted by Felix. Beethoven's Symphony in C minor, 'Coriolanus,' and 'Euryanthe' were beautifully played. Afterwards so many friends from all sides kept rushing upon me and condoling with me about your not having come back and Felix's going away, that it was all I could do to keep back my tears, which flow very easily now, and avoid making a scene. I wish you would tell us some more stories of Ernst. It is a long time since I have been so childless as I am now, for my big boy is taller than I am, and has almost outgrown his childhood, though he is a dear, good, pleasant fellow. Goodbye, my darling. When shall we be *au fait* about you, so that we need not look forward to every letter with such anxiety and trembling?

When Fanny wrote this letter she had quite made up her mind to undertake the journey, and while waiting for Rebecca's answer she made all her preparations, as did Hensel. He had been engaged for some time to paint a picture for an English lady of a scene in Rome, and this he resolved to do in Italy. Thus they were all in a state of eager expectation for the answer from Florence, which arrived in the middle of December

Rebecca to Fanny.

Florence: November 25.

Although I have long known what we are to one another, and that I would do the same for you, each fresh proof of your love touches me and gladdens my heart more than I can say, as did your letter received yesterday, by which I see that you have resolved to undertake the long journey in the depth of winter to bring me comfort, and I hope happiness. For the first time I am almost glad of my *probable* condition, for even now I am not certain about it, or I should have mentioned it long ago, instead of alarming you about my being so ill. Dirichlet has written Felix the whole history, and I will, with all possible brevity, repeat the horrid details to you, so that you may see for yourselves how much chance there is of a merry christening, and reconsider your determination to travel in the depth of winter from Berlin to Florence in order to act the part of sick-nurses. [Here follows an account containing chiefly what has been told already.] Thus I find myself actually in the state I once thought impossible, for I really do not know whether I have been for the last five months progressing towards maternity or not. You must confess that it is a queer story. What I have suffered it is impossible to write, and scarcely possible to tell, but you may well imagine that I have not gone through the doubts, the no, the yes, and the fearful journey here, in the quiet way I am writing about them now; no, indeed, it was 'Agitato ma troppo,' and at times 'Furioso ma non tanto!' If everything goes on well, I suppose the event will take place not later than the beginning of April. I mean to keep as quiet as possible, and perhaps all may turn out better than I think, but I cannot express what a comfort and help you would be to me. I begin to take in the idea that perhaps you will come after all, though at first I could not get it into my head, and at times I am almost beside myself with joy. Last night I woke up and went through the whole of Hensel's eating catechism in my head; I remember it quite well, and can follow all the articles. So it is possible that we may meet at Florence! I begin to hope!

Fanny to Rebecca.

Berlin: December 13, 1844.

My dearest Rebecca,—At last I have your *pater peccavi.* Why you did not send it long ago, or at least let us guess the possibility, we will pass over in silence, as I have laid down for myself a new rule of life, *i.e.* never to waste words about things that are past. In short, we will reverse the fable, and make it, 'Apollo flies, and Daphne him pursues': you cannot come, so we will, and unless we get wholly unforeseen news from you (but everything about you for the last three months has been unforeseen), or some unexpected event should detain us, we shall start between Christmas and New Year's Day, so an answer to this letter would not find us. Kaselowsky will be there,[1] I suppose, and he will look out for lodgings for us; nearness to you is the *sine quâ non*, and nearly all I care for, as I shall spend all my time with you. Hensel means to paint, and will bring a picture he has begun here (Kaselowsky will be able to arrange for that too), and, as for Sebastian, why, he does not want much room. But I do not wish you to take the lodgings (unless you wanted to secure something exceptionally good) till after my next letter, which, I hope, will fix the day of our departure. Possibly the very severe weather we have had for the last fortnight may change after Christmas, for we seldom have such excessive cold. Therefore, Rebecca, put out 'German Tactics' and the game of the mill, lay in an enormous supply of eatables, and set three more chairs by the fireplace, for we are coming. Do you hear? We are coming. If you do not believe, you will see. This is my Christmas present to you, for I hope you will get this letter just at Christmas. Hensel sends his love; hoping to see you so soon, he cannot overcome his usual dislike to writing, and I share the feeling. God grant us a prosperous journey, and that we may find you all well and safe! Best love to your husband, the children, and Kaselowsky. If I had not made it a rule to allow no 'ifs' (a rule I break three or four times a day), I should be heaving sighs

[1] After attending to necessary business he had returned, with a picture he was painting, to do what he could for the Dirichlets.

because you left Rome—we should have been at home there! O Rome, my Rome! In Florence we are 'maidens from a foreign land.' Never complain of your weakness to me again; if, after all that has happened, it goes well with you, I shall say that you have the constitution of a horse, and are a rare specimen of strength. May everything go well!

Felix to Rebecca.

Frankfort: January 10, 1845.

Dear Sister,—You will receive these lines by Fanny, which alone is sufficient to show the time that has passed since our last letters. Fanny will tell you the grave care and anxiety we have been in for the last few months. I was really not fit to write, and moreover did not wish to add my cares to your heavy burden. Thank God, it now looks as if our dear little one were on the way to complete recovery. The doctor says so, and appearances bear him out, so we are beginning to hope again, and thank Heaven daily and hourly! The summer at Soden has, apparently, restored Cécile, for she is well, looks cheerful and blooming, and during the terrible days after my return (when the child was all but gone) her calmness and gentleness supported, and almost cheered me. The three elder children are thriving; Carl gets on with his lessons, Marie sews, and Paul makes a noise fit to break our heads. I think you would be pleased with them. I myself am what you know me to be; but what you do not know is that I have for some time felt the necessity for complete rest—*not* travelling, *not* conducting, *not* performing—so keenly that I am compelled to yield to it, and hope to be able to order my life accordingly for the whole year for repose. It is, therefore, my wish to stay here quietly through winter, spring, and summer, *sans* journey, *sans* musical festival, *sans* everything. And should we not be *obliged* to go to one of the Taunus baths for health's sake, we shall not even do that. Consequently, I have already refused all invitations (among them one which flattered me much, to a musical festival at New York). I grew so fond of our quiet monotonous life at Soden this summer—and the few days since

our child grew better, and we could breathe freely again, have done me so much good too—that these refusals were no effort to me, and I do believe that I was intended for a quiet, uneventful life. At least I feel more healthy and industrious, and more in my element, when I am living so.

Fanny has told you that I was obliged to give up the Berlin appointment. I could not reconcile it to my conscience to remain at the head of a public institution for music the organisation of which I considered bad, and had no power to alter, as that rested *solely* with the king, who has, indeed, other things to think of. More of this when we meet. I will tell you all you care to hear, but you must keep it to yourself.

And some time in the new year let us meet on the Rhine—well, happy, and unchanged. Heaven grant it! Fanny will tell you of my idea of a family congress on the Rhine. Paul is certainly coming. Think over it, and God speed it!

Hoping for a happy meeting, dear sister, yours,

FELIX.

MEETING IN ITALY.

The departure from Berlin was delayed for a few days, for on the very day they had fixed for starting Fanny had the first of many attacks of bleeding at the nose. This one was so violent that it lasted for thirty-six hours, day and night, to the great alarm of all around her; but, much as her friends dreaded them, subsequent events proved that these attacks were salutary rather than otherwise.

After Christmas the extreme cold mitigated, and on January 2, 1845, the Hensels left for Leipzig by train, and from there went on with their own carriage and post-horses. They travelled as far as Munich by long stages, the second and third day even up to midnight, but at Munich they found reassuring letters, and therefore resolved on taking the journey more easily, as was indeed necessary, for the mountain roads were so slippery as to be dangerous by night. The weather continued favourable all the way through Tyrol, by Innsbruck, and Botzen. They had chosen the Brenner Pass as the lowest and safest, and a slight fall of snow, lasting half an hour—the only snow on their journey—did not delay them. The waterfalls, frozen in all manner of fantastic shapes, were a wonderful sight, and the mountains seemed even more solitary and imposing in their winter than in their summer dress.

Crossing the Alps was the great difficulty, and the only part of the journey which might have been dangerous; but obstacles of a different kind arose at the Papal frontier, for the travellers had omitted to have their passports *viséd* by the Papal Nuncio at Munich, and it was only after a two hours' negotiation that they were allowed to proceed to Bologna, where they arrived about midnight, exhausted with hunger and fatigue.

Here Hensel had to go in the dark before tasting a morsel, to the director of the police, in order to obtain permission to leave the Papal States again the next morning. As the carriage entered Bologna in the middle of the night, the streets looked as if they were bounded on each side by high walls of glistening white, for there had been such a heavy fall of snow the week before that all communication had been interrupted. If this had happened on the Alps the route would have been impracticable, and the travellers might have been forced to give up the attempt or go round by France.

From Bologna the Hensels hastened across the Apennines, and, passing the last night at Cavigliaja, drove down to Florence on Sunday, January 19. At first sight they were shocked at Rebecca's looks, so great was the change in her appearance, and she was, moreover, in a state of great excitement, as she had only just received the note announcing their arrival at Verona. Dirichlet, too, was much changed, and looked wretched, from the peculiar effect fever always has on the skin.

Soon, however, they settled down to a very comfortable life. The two sets of lodgings were exactly opposite each other, so that the two families could wish each other 'Good morning' across the street, or even talk secrets from their windows in German. Rebecca speedily picked up strength under Fanny's care, and everything assumed a far pleasanter aspect than might have been expected, but unfortunately Hensel was obliged shortly to leave. All his endeavours to find a suitable model, or costumes, proved in vain, and so he left after a few days for Rome to paint there by himself. The others remained behind in quiet expectation of the event. Rebecca had hired a piano to unite, as she said, the agreeable to the agreeable, and this not only contributed to the general satisfaction, but afforded her a diversion she had much missed.

Felix to the Sisters.

Frankfort: January 29, 1845.

Having received this morning your most welcome message of the 21st, I can write to you both at once. God be praised,

dear Fanny, for the reassuring news you give us! Now that I know that you Hensels are in Florence I am much easier, and more in my natural state of mind. True though it be that we are powerless to help one another in the most important matters (God alone can do that), yet there are many subordinate matters which, when put together, make up a very important part of our happiness or misery; and now that you are together, I think of the many happy hours you will spend, and hope you will have a safe and pleasant journey home again, so that I can now look forward with confidence and renewed hopefulness.

Thank God I have also good news to give you. Our little one's health has greatly improved during the last three weeks, and our hope and courage are returning, for which we praise God daily and hourly. I have been foolish enough to be seriously unwell for the last fortnight, and still get on badly with letter-writing, for my only occupations are eating, drinking, and sleeping, to make up for what I have lost. The doctor took leave of me four days ago, and since then I have been taking a good deal of exercise, and mean to go to a ball on Friday, for which Cécile is having a white dress made trimmed with roses. In short, when meat, wine, and snoring shall have replaced all I have lost by sighing, groaning, and swearing, we shall be in our old state again, with everything right and bright. How much love Cécile sends you I need not tell; she adheres to what she wrote to me in Berlin the other day: 'Fanny and Rebecca belong to each other,' a statement to which I am inclined to assent. You ask me to describe our manner of life. I work early in the morning, and at ten Carl comes and sits by me for an hour reading and ciphering. At five in the afternoon I try to instil into his mind some notion of geography and spelling; but I must be differently constituted from you, for whilst you find when teaching that you have not forgotten your Greek, I find when giving lessons that I have remembered nothing. Marie is learning the scale of C, and even that I partially forgot, for I made her turn her thumb under after the third finger, till Cécile came in upon us and was amazed. Now goodbye, you dear sisters! You, dear Fanny, tell me when we may expect a certain event that occupies us all.

The final calculations of this 'certain event' were as much out as all the others had been. They were looking forward to the catastrophe in the beginning of April, but on February 13 unmistakable symptoms appeared, and matters proceeded so rapidly that there was barely time for the most necessary preparations. For a whole hour Fanny waited in an agony of fear for the doctor, who arrived after all almost simultaneously with little Florentina, the name fixed upon long beforehand if the child should prove, as they hoped, a girl. It would be impossible to describe the surprise and delight of everybody over the healthy baby, but the confusion at first was terrible. The little wardrobe from Berlin had not arrived, and there was literally nothing ready. The next day Fanny's hands were full with making and purchasing immediate necessaries for the baby, writing letters in every direction, and attending to the housekeeping. Curiously enough Rebecca's sufferings ceased at once, and she became as well and cheerful as possible. In a few days the letters of congratulation began to arrive, first from Rome, and then from all the others, and the universal expression of delight and astonishment showed how little any one had admitted the possibility of a living and healthy child being born.

The event having happened so much earlier than it was expected proved in one respect very fortunate for the Hensels. The little Flora was christened on March 12, and, as everything was going on as well as possible, Fanny resolved not to wait for her husband's arrival at Florence, but to follow him to Rome and spend a few weeks there. She and her son started in the diligence on March 15, and going by Siena arrived in Rome, where they found to their great dismay that Hensel had been seriously ill the whole time, but had never mentioned it, for fear of alarming his wife and causing her to leave her sister before it was safe to do so.

His healthy constitution, however, soon righted itself, and Fanny, who had been very downcast during his illness, wrote to Rebecca on a sheet of notepaper, with a very pretty vignette by Geyer, and the following poem by Hensel:—

Tausend Blumen auf den Fluren,
Sommerwarm und thauerfrischt,
Bleichen Winters letzte Spuren
Hat ein linder Hauch verwischt.

Rings im Grün der Vögel Feier
Ob des Lenzes Wiederkunft,
Und die Seele stimmt die Leier
Zu des Waldes Liederzunft.

Alle Sorgen, alle Schmerzen
Sind verweht und abgethan:
Offen stehn die seel' gen Herzen
Um den Frühling zu empfahn.[1]

These pretty emblems of spring bring good news only, for health, fine weather, everything, has come back at once, and the fear that I should not like Rome, which you expressed in your last letter, really made me laugh. The old place is now doing itself justice, and yesterday and the day before yesterday we shook hands and made peace. But I must first apologise for having been hitherto so out of tune. Hensel's illness once or twice looked serious, which made my first few days quite wretched, added to the bad weather, the having no women-servants (which I felt very much at first, but have now got accustomed to, and shall have some lovely stories to tell you when we meet), and the size of our lodgings, which I like now, but which seemed so large compared to those at Florence that I felt quite desolate in them. The street, also, I thought dismal then, though now I have so thoroughly made up my mind that it is destined to become one of the finest in Rome (Nicolo di San Tolentino) that if I had a turn for speculation I would buy up all the vacant places and build such beautiful houses

[1] Flowers lift their lovely faces
On the meadows, on the leas;
Pallid winter's gloomy traces
Melt before the balmy breeze.

Birds rehearse in festive meetings
Welcome choruses to spring,
And we join in grateful greetings
As the wingèd warblers sing.

Earth is happy; all afflictions
Are with ice and snow gone by;
Every breath wafts benedictions
From the blue and sunny sky.

that everybody would want to live here. The situation is good, close to the Pincio and to the fountain of Trevi, the gay world is passing by the whole day long on the way to Porta Pia, and if there were only carriages on the Piazza Barberini the thing would be perfect. From all which you see how true it is that a thing may be black or white according to the way one looks at it. Our rooms look, too, as if they were inhabited by lovers of the fine arts, for we have a piano—quite out of tune, fully half a note too low, and giving out as much sound as a fur cap on a woollen blanket—and, still better, Hensel has this morning begun painting again from a model, and has ordered it, or her, again for the afternoon, which shows that he can work without over-fatigue. Artists here are worse off than ever for models; Chiaruccia is engaged every day till the end of May, Mariuccia actually till January, while another *uccia* asks for a carriage to fetch her, and charges two scudi a day—in short, the best are not to be had at all. I owe an apology also to my Caliban, who does as much work as it takes Heinrich, Sophie, and Colberg to get through with help from Minna in Berlin. He has our dinner ready punctually by half past one, keeps the rooms and everything very clean, goes on all the errands, has the laudable Roman habit of making a separate journey for each single orange or grain of salt, when he runs like a greyhound so as to be back from the Rotunda in a moment, and always has a spare half-hour for making speeches. With all his merits he is a perfect caricature in appearance, and to see him and Heinrich waiting at dinner together would be delightful.

Felix to the Sisters.[1]

Frankfort: March 25, 1845.

Your letter has just arrived, and brought spring with it. For the first time to-day we have out of doors that kind of atmosphere in which ice and winter cold melt away, and all becomes mild, warm, and enjoyable. If, however, you have no driving ice in Florence, you ought to *envy us* instead of the reverse, for it is a splendid spectacle to see the water bubbling under the

[1] Partly published in the Letters, Lady Wallace.

bridge here, and springing and rushing along, and flinging about the great blocks and masses of ice, and saying, 'Away with you! we have done with you for the present!' It also is celebrating its spring-day, and showing that under its icy covering it has preserved both strength and youth, and runs along twice as rapidly, and leaps twice as high as in the sober days of other seasons. You should really see it for once. The whole bridge and the whole quay are black with people, all enjoying the fine sight gratis, with the sun shining on them gratis too. It is very pitiable in me that, instead of speaking of the poetry of spring, I invariably talk of the economy she brings in wood, light, and over-shoes, and how much sweeter everything smells, and how many more good things there are to eat, and that the ladies have resumed their bright gay-coloured dresses, and that the steamboats are going down the Rhine instead of diligences, etc.

From the above you will perceive, and Fanny also (for you must send all my letters to *her* at Rome), that, God be praised, there is nothing new with us, which means that we are all well and happy, and thinking of you. I came with Schlemmer last night from a musical punch-party, where I first played Beethoven's Sonata 106 in B flat, and then drank two hundred and twelve glasses of punch *fortissimo*; we sang the duet from 'Faust' in the Mainz Street, because there was such wonderful moonlight, and to-day I have rather a headache. Pray cut off this part before you send the letter to Rome; a younger sister may be entrusted with such a confidence, but an elder one, and in such a papal atmosphere—not for your life! Edward Magnus, who is here just now on his way from Paris, is painting our Carl, and the picture is very pretty, and very like the boy already. Carl is very good, and sits most patiently, only rushing now and then on Paul and Marie, who are sitting on the ground gazing in admiration, after which he returns and keeps as still as possible for an hour. I am reading them 'Rumpelstilzchen' with great applause. Does Ernst know it? and Walter? and you? If not, I will read it to you too, and you must enjoy it. Paul is fond of imitating Rumpelstilzchen's manœuvre at the end, when he stamps one foot on the ground

and catches hold of the other. He does it beautifully, and I recommend Ernst to try it too.

I have only seen N. three times this winter. He is unfortunately very unsociable; I cannot get on with him even with the best will on my side, and I believe he is going on worse now than for many years past. Any one who enters at all into the religious squabbles of the moment, and does not steadily refuse to listen to them, one and all, must become so deeply involved as to be ere long severed unawares from both friends and happiness, and instances of this begin to be manifest in Germany in all circles. In my inmost heart I feel uncertain as to which extreme is the most repugnant to me, and yet I cannot clearly decide between them. See if you cannot find *Punch* for January 18. It contains an account of 'Antigone' at Covent Garden, with illustrations, especially a view of the chorus, which has made me laugh for three days. The chorus-master, with his plaid trousers showing underneath, is a masterpiece, and so is the whole thing, and most amusing. I hear wonderful things of the performance, particularly of the chorus. Only fancy that during the Bacchus chorus there is a regular ballet with all the ballet girls. This is literally true. Positively, they have asked me when they may produce 'Œdipus,' and I have referred them to the king of Prussia. My score has been completed within the last few days, and, if I continue as pleased with the music as I am now, I think you will like it too, when I rattle it over to you at Soden. The six organ sonatas are also finished. Would you like to hear them on the organ at Ober-Liederbach? The schoolmaster is a kind man, and will give us leave most willingly. (Here I was interrupted by the children, who wanted to show me a great tower they have built, and on the flat roof of which they have ranged all their slices of bread and jam. A good idea for an architect!) A symphony and a trio are begun, and I have an idea for a new oratorio, but people will keep worrying me for an opera—all well and good, if one could hit upon a suitable subject. But in that matter I have not succeeded so far, and without a fascinating subject, or one that appears so to me, I will not attempt it. An opera, like other music, cannot be written to please other

people, but simply as one's own conscience dictates. Yesterday I heard another opera, 'quite German,' the libretto after Scribe, and the music after Auber, but for that very reason far better than those of Aloys Schmitt or the other Germans. Dear me! it is very bad, but why does not the king of Prussia grant a constitution? Can you imagine the States in Berlin set to music? Where am I getting to? ('*Quo me rapis?*' as Sebastian would say.) *Vale*, farewell, that is all the Latin I know.

Rebecca stayed on quietly at Florence in the meantime, but Dirichlet was obliged to leave in the beginning of April for Berlin, to resume his lectures. He gives the following description of crossing the Alps:—

Here I am at Coire, an indisputable proof that the passes are open. As soon as I got to Milan I heard that all they said at Florence about communication being interrupted on the St. Gothard was an invention, and that the diligences had been going over the Simplon, St. Bernard, the Splügen, and St. Gothard daily throughout the winter, and that the courier had even been crossing the Stelvio once a week. On receiving this intelligence, and learning that nothing worse was to be feared than a little delay in case of fresh-fallen snow, I should have liked to take the St. Gothard as the shortest pass, but fortunately all the seats for Friday were taken, and I had to go by the longer route to Coire. I say fortunately, for we discovered the next day that so much snow had fallen on Thursday and Friday that there was a delay of some hours in crossing the Splügen, and so the higher and more exposed St. Gothard would have probably taken a whole day longer. A journey across the Alps in winter is certainly no *partie de plaisir*, but interesting enough in its way to make up for some inconvenience. You can really form no idea of the quantity of snow which accumulates in the course of the winter in those high regions. Here and there one sees the barrier which guards the road at the edge of the precipice peeping out of the snow eighteen or twenty feet below one, so that there evidently must be from twenty to twenty-five feet of snow underneath the track on which

one is driving. If it is firm the sledge glides along splendidly, and faster than a carriage, but this is far from being the case when, as yesterday, one has to form a path through new-fallen snow. At every moment one is in danger of sinking some yards deep, and it is a matter of congratulation to be only upset twice, as I was. A Milanese gentleman whom I met this morning at breakfast, and who had made the same journey the day before, was not so lucky, and found himself lying in the snow no less than five times. One part amused me very much, the driving, or rather scrambling, down the so-called winter road, which is quite different from the proper one, and on which you let the horses run straight down, just as you do with your own person on the crater of Mount Vesuvius. In this manner the endless wastes of snow carried me back to the volcano.

Felix to Rebecca.

Frankfort: April 11, 1845.

Many thousand good wishes for your birthday, my dearly beloved little sister. How much rather would I be saying so than writing it. Oh! how I wish I could drop in upon you with a gold nothing or a silver 'wait-a-while' as a birthday-gift—but, stop! I have a pretty present for you to day, and one that you will like, in the shape of a delightful piece of news. Klingemann is engaged to Sophie Rosen of Detmold (he is to fetch her in May, and promises to come here as soon as they are married), and is as happy as possible. I was so glad when I got his letter a few days ago that I danced round the room for full five minutes. I made her acquaintance last summer in England (where he first knew her), and feel sure she will make him an excellent wife, for she has the same quiet, pleasant manners as her brother who died, and the same modesty and depth of feeling, is thoroughly well educated, and very pretty to look at. She has smooth fair hair parted in the middle, and a thorough German face, round, with blue eyes—there is a perfect *signalement* for you. When Klingemann was travelling last winter, he passed through Detmold and met her again; he thought about it very seriously, but gave no indication of his feelings

till lately, when he wrote from England, and now he is engaged. You cannot think how glad I am.

Meantime here is the 12th, and your letter has arrived with Fanny's, and I can read between the lines that you are well and happy again. God be praised! There is certainly such a thing as sympathy in the world, for the children have been talking of nothing but Rumpelstilzchen for the last four days, and now it is the very first topic in your letter.

I have just been practising for an hour, for to-morrow I am going to play Beethoven's sonata in C major at a concert in the Cäcilien-Verein for the sufferers from the floods. The atmosphere here too is quite spring-like, and we have violets, and the fresh green. What a change it seems to make in one's whole being. But the floods were terrible. A large part of one of the buttresses of the bridge is still lying in the Maine, and I have sent to ask the senate to let it remain till July, as you might be interested to see it. They answered very politely that it would have been left in any case, but was certain to be so now that I had made the request. There are green peas here too, but they are too dear for me, so what is the good? But green peas cheap! That is something like spring! So Dirichlet is coming? We are looking forward not a little to his arrival, that you may be sure of.

Felix to Fanny.

Frankfort: April 20, 1845.

Dear Fanny,—This letter is meant for you, but I must address it to Rebecca, for two reasons: first, because I have not got your direction, and secondly because Dirichlet started down the Rhine yesterday, well, and in good spirits, after spending a day with us, and enjoined upon me to write directly after his departure. His friends here would not recognise him with that enormous beard, besides which he looks much stronger and younger and fatter than he used to do. He was in great spirits. We spent the evening at Madame Jeanrenaud's (I had to tie his cravat for him). You can imagine the number of questions he had to answer. He could not make out how it was I had

not received your letter, dear Fanny, until he suddenly remembered that it was in his own pocket. Many thanks for it.

If you hold to your intention of leaving Florence by the middle of June, everything will coincide most favourably for our family congress. A room to paint in is also to be found at Soden, that is to say, there are rooms with a northern aspect and only one window—plenty of them—and with a capital light. I cannot, of course, promise you a regular studio, but, as I said before, only come and we will look out at once for the best painting-room to be had.

May God grant us all health, and such days as these, when the exquisite blue sky makes one hate one's desk, pen, and ink, and stopping indoors altogether, for which reason you must be content with these hasty lines, for I am longing to be out again and see the green leaves and the buds bursting into blossom. The four children have been out some time already, and this afternoon we are all going together to the forest.

The manuscript of my six organ sonatas is on its way to the copyist, who will send it on to Breitkopf and Härtel. I will play them to you at Ober-Liederbach, that is to say, by three at a time, for all six are too fatiguing, as I found the other day when trying them. I shall most likely, also, have a new book of 'songs without words' printed, and dedicate them to Klingemann's bride. The trio is a trifle nasty to play, but not really difficult: 'Seek and ye shall find.'

The Hensels returned to Florence with all possible speed, by Perugia, the way the Dirichlets had taken, and arrived in good time on May 20, to find all well and happy. After a few pleasant weeks there they left with Rebecca and the three children on June 15.

Fanny's Diary.

On June 16 we drove to Pisa, and found that it was the very evening for the famous Luminara, a fairy-like illumination of the town, in honour of some patron saint. It is said to be as a rule a very grave and silent place, indeed almost desolate, but we

found it extremely gay from the crowds of people who had come to see the Luminara. Our first walk was to the piazza of the cathedral, which is a splendid building, with very ancient mosaics and fine carving; but we were most interested by the Campo Santo, the subject of the picture by Elsasser which Paul bought through Rebecca's interposition. We stayed there for a long time admiring the beauty of the spot, discussing the point of view from which Elsasser had taken his sketch, and finally agreeing that he had not taken any one precise 'Veduta,' but summed up, as it were, the interest and beauty of the whole spot, and thus created a work of art of his own. One gets quite vexed with the leaning tower, for as it is one's eye is only distressed by it, and yet from its pure and noble proportions it might be one of the finest buildings of Italy.

In the afternoon we heard to our great regret that the Luminara had been put off on account of the uncertain weather, so after an almost endless debate we decided to go back to Lucca, and return to Pisa the next day if the weather were favourable. The drive back seemed like a journey through fairyland or the Arabian Nights, for the whole way to Lucca every house was illuminated, besides the millions of glow-worms, and the lovely moon and stars; all round us and above seemed nothing but one glittering sea of light. The next day was fine and clear, so we returned to Pisa, first going to see the herd of camels, the only one in Europe since the time of the crusades. We found a few animals in the stable, but were told that about a mile farther in the forest we should find a quantity, and so we did. In an open glade in the forest, studded with a few splendid trees, was grazing a herd of forty or fifty camels, and it looked so strange to see in the open air, doing just as they pleased, such a number of the creatures one is accustomed to see singly in menageries, cramped up and deprived of all freedom of movement. They were very phlegmatic and tame, hardly stirring from the positions they had taken, whether standing, lying, or kneeling, but almost all were ruminating, and they stared at us with their queer faces. It was such a strange, out-of-the-way scene to come upon in the deep quietness and solitude of the wood, that we tore ourselves away with

difficulty, and the children would have liked to stay altogether. Thence we got back to the town, to the cathedral piazza, where we could hardly make our way through the dense, noisy crowd, and then went once more over the cathedral and the Campo Santo, by which time the darkness had set in, the lamps were lit, and the Luminara began. The prettiest view is on the Lungarno, the street on both sides of the Arno, following the large semicircular bend of the river, and chiefly consisting of fine quays with splendid palaces built on them. Where the houses are smaller they hide them on this occasion with scaffolding, made to imitate palaces, and illuminated. The illumination extends to all parts of the town, even the remotest alleys; and the bridges, quays, ships, and boats, all shining in the dazzling light, look magnificent, especially when seen from the centre of the Lungarno.

From thence the travellers hastened on, without accident of any kind, by Genoa, Milan, the Splügen, and Switzerland, to Freiburg in Breisgau, where they meet the Woringens, and the day after their arrival Felix and Paul: so the long-talked-of family meeting was realised at last. They all remained there for six days, and then went down the Rhine to Mayence and Soden, where a delightful fortnight was spent at the Felicians'.

During this time it was decided that Felix should resume his old post at Leipzig. On August 2 the Hensels and Dirichlets arrived safely at Berlin.

CONCLUSION.

Two years of quiet but intensely happy home life remain to be described. With the exception of a few days at Leipzig, this journey to Italy was the last occasion on which Fanny left her house and garden.

The spring of 1846 was early and unusually fine, and Fanny enjoyed it thoroughly. They had perfect summer weather in the beginning of March, and by the 17th the almond-trees were in full bloom. Towards the end of April she writes: 'It is already summer in the garden, the blossom of the fruit-trees is over, and the lilacs and chestnuts are in full beauty—a very rare occurrence. This lovely spring has done me so much good, I feel a child again, and enjoy our garden, which gets more beautiful every day, like a happiness which is always eluding our grasp. The house has so many drawbacks in winter that we have a sort of right to this compensation. I have resumed my *matinées*, and some have been very successful, especially as the garden-hall at this time of year gives them such a distinct character. But it is a serious matter to look forward a year or two and think of the changes which must take place. Our circle of friends has been filling in lately. The Jakobys are a very pleasant addition. His superiority of mind shows itself in every way, and he is as pleasant as possible with us, and thoroughly understands and appreciates listening to music. Another agreeable acquaintance is Herr v. Keudell,[1] who has such an ear for music as I have not met with since Gounod and Dugasseau, plays extremely well, and is altogether a very lively and charming man. Behr, Borchardt, and the other young

[1] Now ambassador in Rome.

people are bright and amusing, and on the whole our social circle is pleasanter than it has been for a long while.'[1]

R. v. Keudell had been lately introduced to the Hensels, and soon became one of their most intimate friends, hardly a day passing without his coming in to play for an hour or to spend the evening. Associating with such an excellent musician was an agreeable stimulus to Fanny. Towards the end of July 1846 she writes: 'Keudell keeps my music alive and in constant activity, as Gounod did once. He takes an intense interest in everything that I write, and calls my attention to any shortcomings; being generally in the right too.' He had a serious illness, through which he was carefully nursed by the Hensels, and when he was recovering Fanny remarks in her diary: 'I may well say that I missed him very much indeed, for the want of musical intercourse with him made itself continually felt. No more benevolent but at the same time strict and careful criticism than his can be imagined, and his advice has always been worth taking.

Probably it was in part owing to his persuasion that Fanny about this time decided on publishing some of her music. There had been repeated discussions on this subject at an earlier period, as previously mentioned (p. 33), but lately two rival publishers of Berlin had made her such brilliant offers that she resolved on selecting a few of her compositions for the purpose. She had, however, no intention whatever of publishing on a large scale, although the publishers would have gladly taken any amount, as her own reputation in Berlin and her brother's world-wide fame would have insured a large sale for her works. In the meantime she was glad to see her best things published, and, the remainder of her life being so short, she tasted only the pleasures of authorship. Felix had not altered his views, and it went rather against his wishes when he heard that she had made up her mind to publish. Some time passed before he wrote upon the subject at all, and Fanny was beginning to feel a little hurt; but on August 14 the following

[1] Another musical celebrity of the period was Jenny Lind, who often came to see the Hensels, and was afterwards very intimate with Felix and his family

entry occurs in her diary: 'At last Felix has written, and given me his professional blessing in the kindest manner. I know that he is not quite satisfied in his heart of hearts, but I am glad he has said a kind word to me about it.'

The following is the letter:—

Leipzig: August 12, 1846.

My dearest Fance,—Not till to-day, just as I am on the point of starting, do I, unnatural brother that I am, find time to thank you for your charming letter, and send you my professional blessing on becoming a member of the craft. This I do now in full, Fance, and may you have much happiness in giving pleasure to others; may you taste only the sweets and none of the bitternesses of authorship; may the public pelt you with roses, and never with sand; and may the printer's ink never draw black lines upon your soul—all of which I devoutly believe will be the case, so what is the use of my wishing it! But it is the custom of the guild, so take my blessing under my hand and seal.

(L. S.) The journeyman tailor,
FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY.

P.S. I was very much pleased with Herr von Keudell, who has been here lately. He will have told you of the musical party he came in for—where the clarinet again got out in the time in that easy trio of Mozart's. Oh dear!

A happy thought.

At your Sunday *matinées* next year, why should you not try something with an accompaniment for wind instruments? One of Mozart's, or Spohr's, or Beethoven's quintets would be charming as interpreted by your expressive fingers. I throw out this hint solely for your benefit, for I have not breathed a word of it to anybody else, as I think of making use of it myself one of these days.

The nurse was so very nice,[1] and when she went downstairs

[1] The baby's nurse, whom the Dirichlets were sending back to Italy.

crying and calling out *tanti baci a Fiora*, I nearly cried too. She had her dinner here, but I kept up such a conversation in Italian that she could scarcely eat a morsel. Why, by the way, does Dirichlet never write such letters to his brother-in-law as he wrote to Ohm by the nurse? (You see I read everything.) I put her in charge of the guard, and gave her a *billet-doux* for the diligence office at Reichenbach. All this is meant for Rebecca, as I have just found out, but never mind; you two are and always will be the fish-otters, a simile which occurs to me just now because Cécile has taken to the 'Flegeljahre,' and the book is always on the table.[1] Enough for to-day; my love to Paul, whose visit gave us incredible pleasure. I shall see you this autumn, please God, well and happy.

Extract from a Letter of Rebecca to Cécile.

Berlin: August 14, 1846.

To-day I will only thank you for your kindness to the nurse; I am sure seeing you was a most unexpected pleasure to her, for she had been told that she would have not a moment to spare at Leipzig. Everything about trains and diligences is wrapped in mystery as far as we are concerned. We were all sorry to see the good creature leave, for she was a very pleasant person to have about one, and you know from experience, dear Cécile, how seldom one likes the *entourage* of a baby; but this nurse was so attached to the child, and to all of us, partly from her isolation from the other servants, and her language recalled so many pleasant reminiscences, that it is a great pity that I could not keep her. The only advantage of the change is that baby now bestows all her attentions on me.

What do you say to this glorious summer? I only regret that you are spending it in the town of Leipzig. I am perfectly satisfied with my country-house in town, for the garden is beautiful beyond description, and my health much better than I could have expected after last winter. Next to Karlsbad water and the fine air, my pleasant existence with Fanny has

[1] See vol. i. p. 202.

done me most good. You once wrote that we two belonged to each other, and you are quite right.

At this moment I hear Fanny downstairs playing Felix's 'Lerchenlied' over and over again quite slowly, which has so excited my curiosity that I call out of the window and ask her what it all means. She replies that she is teaching Sebastian the *bass*, but his powerful organ has not reached me. Fancy Fanny's having a son with a bass voice!

Once more, many thanks for the dinner, the talk in Italian, the *billet-doux*, and especially to Felix for nearly crying (I did it in reality), and for everything.

Fanny to Cécile.

Autumn 1846 (without date).

How I pity you for having had to spend this most lovely of all summers in town. We have been enjoying it in our garden as I hardly remember to have enjoyed a summer before, and I have felt inclined to say to each moment as it passed, 'Oh, stay a while, thou art so sweet!'[1] Meanwhile autumn is upon us without our scarcely perceiving its approach, and we have cool mornings and evenings, though the days are still lovely. I should have liked you to share our calm and pleasant life, and I regret to hear of your being so thin and having so poor an appetite. Rebecca has got quite plump, and except for a few days last week she has been quite strong and well the whole summer; if we had had you, we should have taken just as much care of you. Again, I am so sorry that you should share in the expense of the house without sharing our enjoyment of the garden, which has been beyond words this summer. Our whole manner of life is so closely bound up with the place that the very idea of perhaps having to live somewhere else some day frightens me.

When Felix wrote the letter inserted above, he was on the point of starting for England, where the first performance of the 'Elijah' was to take place at Birmingham. He had been

[1] This phrase, or something like it, occurs twice in Goethe's 'Faust.'

hard at work upon this oratorio the whole year. How much care and attention he bestowed on the words is evinced by his letters to Schubring and Bendemann (May 23, November 9, 1846), even *after* the great success in Birmingham. The performance of 'Œdipus' and 'Athalie' brought him, to Fanny's great joy, several times to Berlin. In June he made a pleasant tour on the Rhine, being present at the Whitsuntide festival at Aix-la-Chapelle, the Corpus Christi festival at Liège, and the great Männer-Gesangsfest at Cologne, which all followed each other in rapid succession. For Liège he had written a 'Lauda Sion' for solo, chorus, and orchestra, and for the Sängerfest in Cologne a Festgesang, 'An die Künstler,' to Schiller's words, 'Der Menschheit Würde ist in Eure Hand gegeben.' After his return to Leipzig he wrote about this trip to the Rhine and Holland :—

Leipzig : June 27, 1846.

Dear Fanny,—Anybody who could resist such witchery as you have employed to extract a long letter from me must be either the old gentleman himself or a close connection of his, so I take a large sheet of paper and set to work at once, although I am more driven than ever, as an immense piece of 'Elijah' is not yet copied, whilst the first part is already in rehearsal in England; moreover, Spohr, whom we have had to entertain every day for dinner and the evening, only left this morning. He arrived here a few days after my return, and we gave a concert at the Gewandhaus, entirely devoted to his compositions. He played all the trios, quartets, and double quartets with us, and I am always glad to have him as a guest, only this time his visit seemed to make my head quite giddy and confused, for everything around me was as confused as this sentence is (which I should like to bring to an end), and I ought to have had a week's rest after my trip to the Rhine, instead of being present at, and making arrangements for, new festivals ; and, on the top of all this, you ask me to write you a long letter! Remember, Fanny, it will be your own fault if it is stupid and incoherent, for I am so myself; but, fill these four pages I will, that I swear by my beard ; and when that is

done, first thing to-morrow morning I shall shut myself up and decline to budge till 'Elijah' is finished, which may not be for another three weeks, and that I also swear by my beard.

You ask what I did on the Rhine; but the misfortune is, that Cécile's letter to Paul, giving, at my request, all the details of my tour, crossed yours to me, so that I cannot possibly ascertain what you know and what you do not know. The best way will be for me to write only what I know Cécile *cannot* have told you, for indeed there is some choice of material. Three such eventful weeks I never in my life passed before, for I was never in bed till midnight or one o'clock, and up again by six, and from half past six the whirl began again, and went on till midnight or one o'clock. The main feature of my stay at Aix-la-Chapelle was that both the Marquis de Sassenay and Burgomaster Nellesen made unheard-of exertions to provide me with milky rice-pudding (Mlle. Lind having told them how fond I was of it), but they did not succeed, for their French cooks in every case produced something different, much grander, but still not milky rice. Once, too, I took a bath, and when I was in it found it was the tepid spring of Aix, and it made me so drowsy that I all but fell asleep ever so many times during the day. A Frenchman from Paris inquired on Sunday, 'Qu'est-ce qu'elle chante ce soir, Mlle. Lind?' I answered, 'La Création,' upon which he turned upon me and said, 'Comment peut-elle chanter la Création? La dernière fois que j'ai entendu la Création en France, c'était une *basse-taille* qui la chantait!' The choruses were splendidly sung, and if Paul could have heard Jenny Lind sing the two first airs of Alexander's 'Feast,' he would have applauded as he did that time at the concert. Onslow asked me again for my *bâton*, and I had to write something on it, upon which he has written an article in the French papers. Like a *grand monarque*, he left me his portrait in plaster of Paris, intimating that I might like to have it copied to give his friends an opportunity of getting it at Kistner's. Kyllmann was just the same, as pleasant as ever, and I spent a happy day at his house, and thought of the time when we were there with our parents. A few dear good people never change, thank God—only a few, but still there

they are. On the Saturday before Whit Sunday Simrock spent an hour with me over 'Elijah,' and at eight the rehearsal began, and was not over till two, when there was a grand dinner, at which I was *obliged* to be present, and which lasted till half past four. At five the general rehearsal of the 'Creation' began, and lasted till about nine, and at nine I went to see the Swedish Professor Geyer (you remember him in Lindblad's time), where we had music, and I played the sonata in C sharp minor, and some 'songs without words,' etc. Immediately after Aix-la-Chapelle followed Düsseldorf, where they serenaded me twice, as the two *Liedertafeln* of the place hate each other to that extent that they could not be induced to combine. The mention of Düsseldorf sobers me, for the few days I spent there recalled unpleasant associations: add to which that Rietz is so shockingly treated by the musicians there that he has made up his mind to leave (I hope he will, too); that many of my merry companions in former days are sadly changed, and that very few keep still the same. That Hildebrand is among the latter I need not tell you; Lessing, too, hammers away with his old perseverance, and leads the same quiet life he always did. Both the Hasenclevers looked very well, and I think they have changed for the better. Rietz's concert was crowded, but there was a something I did not like about it—there did not seem to be a friendly feeling, though it was neither aristocratic nor orderly. Fortunately it was followed by that delightful half-day at Kyllmann's, when we played to our hearts' content on his new Erard, and pronounced Veuve Clicquot an excellent woman. *A propos*, one chief result of my journey is that I am to have every year two dozen bottles from the widow. Thereby hangs a tale which I will unfold when we meet. I was back in Cologne the same evening, and next day at Liège. Cécile is sure to have written all about the Orbans, and the torchlight procession with my 'Meerestille,' and the German song, 'O Belgique!'

That I did not conduct came about in the natural course of events. I arrived only a quarter of an hour before the general rehearsal, without a thought of beating time, and though they bothered me dreadfully I said I had come to listen,

and stuck to my intention. Moreover, the bishops had cut down the expenses so that the means were very inefficient, and nothing could have been done with one rehearsal. However, I was very happy listening, and can now form some idea of how my 'Lauda Sion' will sound when well performed. Some parts of it would, I think, please you, and I shall be glad to play it to you. On the way back I dined at Düren with Wergifosse, and Frau Iven sang till the train started. If the Dirichlets' ears did not tingle that day they never will. In the evening at Cologne the first rehearsal took place at the Gürzenich, and I heard and conducted for the first time my Schiller's 'Festgesang.' It sounded very jolly. The next day we had the two thousand voices. How did that sound? Well, as far as that goes it was no *louder* than any other choir (a fact which always surprises people), but to a practised ear there was a certain whirr and rush, just as thirty violins are no *louder* than ten, but different, more penetrating, and more massive. I was very much pleased with it. The Seydlitzens (Verkenius's daughter and widow, you know), whose guest I was, were most good and kind, and it was particularly gratifying to me to receive so many marks of esteem and approval from a German audience. Wherever I appeared during the whole three weeks, but especially at Cologne, the people cheered and shouted, and when the greater part of the two thousand singers sang my 'Volkslied' *by heart*, I was not only immensely pleased but quite overcome. When we meet I shall have many amusing incidents to tell you, that seem too insignificant to write about.

In the meantime 'Elijah' had been finished, and the first performance took place at Birmingham on August 25, 1846. Felix gives an account of it in two published letters, one to Paul, the other to Madame Frege at Leipzig.

A period of perfect rest exercised its accustomed beneficial influence on him after the fatigues of this summer. On September 29, immediately after his return to Leipzig, he wrote to Fanny:—

I cannot yet make up my mind to undertake a journey or *anything else*, but after the exertions of this summer, and all

the travelling I have had to go through, I am now leading a vegetable existence. Ever since my arrival, when a single glance told me that all were well and happy, I have done nothing the whole day long but eat, sleep, and take walks, and yet I never seem to get enough of either occupation. I ought to be preparing the 'Elijah' for press, ought to be sending the parts to Bonn to have the German words added, so that it may be speedily performed in this country, but, as I said before, I must indulge myself, and be lazy for a little longer. In fact, I have been idling ever since the last note was played and sung at the Town Hall. I was asked to go to Manchester for two concerts, but declined, and went to London instead, where my only important business was a 'fish dinner' at Lovegrove's at Blackwall, after which I stayed four days at Ramsgate for sea-air, and ate crabs, and enjoyed myself with the Benekes as I had done with the Klingemanns in London. Then I stayed a day at Ostend because I felt sleepy, and another at Cologne with the Seydlitzes, because I was too tired to go on. Then four more at Horchheim, where my uncle walked me about in his vineyards for an hour and a half in the broiling sun, and took me such a pace that I was over and over again on the point of telling him I could not keep up with him, but felt ashamed, and stopped my mouth by stuffing tepid purple grapes into it. Then I stayed a day at Frankfort because I was so weary, and ever since I got back to Leipzig I have been resting.

Fanny's quiet life this summer was a great contrast to that of her brother, but she was happier than she had ever been, and constantly remarks upon it in her diary. Thus she writes on August 14: 'The indescribable feeling of well-being which I have had all this summer still continues, just as does the exquisite weather, the like of which has not been seen for years. I begin to fear that I am too placid, and am getting selfish, because other people's troubles no longer seem to interfere with my comfort, and I argue about it with Wilhelm, whose illness in the spring has left a kind of nervous irritability, which makes him really ill if he has anything to worry him or call forth his sympathy. These occasions arise only too frequently, but the

warm weather has done him a great deal of good also, although he regrets that he no longer feels the same elasticity that he used to have. I am working a good deal, and feel that I get on, a consciousness which, added to the glorious weather, gives me a feeling of content and happiness such as I have perhaps never before experienced, except for a short time during our first stay in Rome.

During the winter Fanny Hensel, encouraged by the success of many of her pieces, began a work on a larger scale, a trio for piano, violin, and violoncello, which was performed with universal applause on April 11 (Rebecca's birthday), at the first of the Sunday *matinées*. The day was an important one altogether, for it was the opening of the Prussian Landtag, an event to which the last pages of the diary contain many allusions, showing that Fanny was decidedly on the side of the opposition. 'Now politics will for a time take the lead, and absorb all other interests,' she writes. Her feeling of happiness and perfect contentment was, however, lasting, as one of the last entries in the diary shows. 'Yesterday the first breath of spring was in the air. It has been a long winter, with much frost and snow, universal dearth and distress, indeed a winter full of suffering. What have we done to deserve being among the few happy ones in the world? My inmost heart is at any rate full of thankfulness, and when in the morning after breakfasting with Wilhelm we each go to our own work, with a pleasant day to look back upon, and another to look forward to, I am quite overcome with my own happiness.'

In the middle of May 1847 she had another attack of bleeding from the nose, which was stopped this time by a new remedy. On Friday afternoon, May 14, she was conducting a rehearsal by her little choir of the music for the next Sunday, but while sitting at the piano playing the accompaniment she felt suddenly ill, her hands fell powerless by her side, she became speechless and helpless, and shortly after lost consciousness. Medical aid was at hand, but all was in vain, and by eleven o'clock at night all was over. A rush of blood to the head had killed her.

In the place of the piano in the garden-hall on Sunday stood the coffin, covered with exquisite flowers, sent more especially by the Deckers, who had ransacked their beautiful conservatories. Wilhelm Hensel took a sketch of the deceased, one of his best likenesses, and the hardest task he ever fulfilled. To him it was the loss of everything, for his whole family life was destroyed. In all cases, except where the daily labour has not to provide the daily bread, the death of the mother creates a more irreparable void than that of the father, but seldom has this been felt more intensely than it was in this case. All business matters, the whole management of the house, the superintendence of the property, the education of their son, had been her care, for in all these things her husband was perfectly inexperienced, living as he did wholly for his art. But even in this his own peculiar sphere, her influence had been greater than he had been aware of, and he was completely distracted when he had lost her. Hitherto the most industrious of men, he had orders insuring him years of interesting work, and a large picture for the coronation-hall at Brunswick almost finished; but he never painted anything worth having during the fifteen years that he survived her, and never touched again the picture for Brunswick so near completion. Though formerly he had almost to be driven from his studio in the evening to take exercise, and abhorred letter-writing to such an extent that he invariably postponed it whenever possible, he now spent most of his time out of doors or in writing letters. Formerly he would look hastily through the newspapers at meal-times, and could not be induced to take an interest in politics: now his table was littered with newspapers, and he frequented clubs and meetings with a feverish restlessness. Housekeeping he never attempted again.

The impression made by Fanny's person and character may be summed up in a few words. She was small, and had—an inheritance from Moses Mendelssohn—one shoulder higher than the other, but very slightly so. Her chief beauty was her large dark, very expressive eyes, which did not betray her short-sightedness. Her nose and mouth were rather large, but she had fine white teeth. Her hands were those of an accomplished

pianist. Her movements were quick and decided, and her countenance full of life, faithfully reflecting every change of mood. She never could disguise her feelings, and everybody soon found out what she thought of them; for while she would show her delight at seeing a dear friend immediately, if anybody approached whom she did not like wrinkles would at once form in her forehead and at the corners of her mouth. Few have the same faculty of enjoying anything beautiful, whether it were fine weather, a handsome face, distinguished talent, or beautiful scenery. She was very fond of the fresh air, and used to call it one of her greatest enjoyments. Her disgust at anything ugly, and her wrath with anything bad, were equally intense. She could not bear dull, insipid, vain, or shallow people, and had a few *bêtes noires*, her antipathy to whom she could not get over. When called upon to endure their presence, her countenance would assume an expression of such deep distress as would often cause the greatest amusement among those around her, from the disproportion between the offence and the state of mind it produced. As soon as it was over she would laugh about it, without being able to manage any better the next time. Luxury and creature comforts she was indifferent about, caring nothing for good eating and drinking, good accommodation, dress, or any articles of luxury. What she did require was intercourse with a few refined and clever people, and the pleasures of art. The love of liberty was deeply rooted in her character; and she held aloof from people who prided themselves either on their birth or their wealth. She had a great aversion to paying calls and other 'social duties,' and kept out of all such as much as possible. She was the most faithful and constant of friends to all she thought worthy of her intimacy, and capable of any sacrifice for their sake.

All this was now swept away, and by so sudden a blow that her unprepared relatives seemed to have no fortitude left wherewith to meet it. Felix, sensitive to all impressions whether of joy and sorrow, and capable more than most of giving intense expression to his feelings, re-echoed, as it were, what was in the mind of all the mourners when he wrote :—

If the sight of my handwriting checks your tears, put the letter away, for we have nothing left now but to weep from our inmost hearts; we have been so happy together, but a saddened life is beginning now. You made my sister very happy, dear Hensel, through her whole life, as she deserved to be. I thank you for it to-day, and shall do so as long as I live, and longer too I hope, not only in words, but with bitter pangs of regret, that I did not do more myself for her happiness, did not see her oftener, was not with her oftener. That would indeed have been for my own pleasure, but it pleased her too. I am too much stunned yet by the blow to be able to write as I would: still I dare not leave my wife and children and come to you, knowing as I do that I can bring neither help nor comfort. Help and comfort —how different these words sound from all I have been thinking and feeling since yesterday morning. This will be a changed world for us all now, but we must try and get accustomed to the change, though by the time we have got accustomed to it our lives may be over too.

Forgive me, I ought to write something else to you, but I cannot! If you ever want a faithful brother, who loves you with his whole heart, think of me. I am sure I shall be a better man than I have been, though not such a happy one. But what shall I say to you, my dear Sebastian? There is nothing to say or to do but this one thing: pray to God that He may create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us, so that we may even in this world become more and more worthy of *her* who had the purest heart and spirit we ever knew or loved. God bless her, and point us out the way which none of us can see for ourselves; and yet there must be one, for God Himself has inflicted this blow upon us for the remainder of our lives, and may He soften the pain. Alas, my dear brother and friend! God be with you and with Sebastian, and with us three, her brothers and sister.

A dreary summer passed away. Felix and Paul, with their families, met Hensel in Switzerland, and endeavoured to find support and comfort from imperishable nature, but they did not succeed. Any one reading Felix's letters after Fanny's death, and

hearing the intensely sad, passionate F minor quartet which he wrote in the summer of 1847, will at once feel the change which had come over his spirit: the blow was mortal. It is remarkable that it was not to his own art that he first turned for comfort, but to painting. The water-colour sketches he brought home from his last Swiss journey show marked progress on the former ones. Broader in design, there is still the same minute treatment and correct drawing and observation of detail, but a much greater freedom of handling, and force and harmony of colouring. In fact, they are real pictures, such as no artist need have been ashamed to own.

Paul and his family and Hensel returned to Berlin after a stay of four weeks in Switzerland, but Felix and his family remained till September. Gradually he took up music again, and formed great plans in his mind—an oratorio, 'Christus'—left unfinished—several compositions of sacred music, instrumental pieces, a few songs, and, above all, the opera 'Loreley,' for which Geibel had written a libretto which perfectly satisfied him. It was very striking that his long-cherished wish for a good opera-libretto should only be realised as the sands of life were running out.

After his return to Leipzig his friends did indeed find him stronger in body and unchanged in mind, as full as ever of life and fire when at the piano or when talking on musical subjects; but these moments of excitement were followed by deep depression, when he shunned society, and shrank from seeing even his most intimate friends. He looked older too, and paler, and had a general air of exhaustion. Once active and energetic almost to restlessness, he would now sit idle with his hands in his lap; instead of walking with his old quick elastic step, he would drag his feet slowly and wearily along, while his irritability with regard to trifling annoyances was extreme. He felt the atmosphere of the town oppressive, and seriously thought of retiring and settling in some beautiful spot on the Rhine.

A week's visit to Berlin and the sight of Fanny's rooms, which had been left untouched—and remained so until the house was sold—upset him again, and destroyed all the good effects produced by the journey to Switzerland. He resigned

the conductorship of the Gewandhaus-concerts and of the performance of 'Elijah' at Berlin, fixed for November 3, but adhered to the idea of conducting it in Vienna, on November 14, when Jenny Lind was to sing.

On October 9 he took a walk in the morning with Moscheles and his wife, seeming in very low spirits at first, but brightening up till he became almost gay. In the afternoon he went to see Mme. Frege, to talk over the selection and arrangement of a new book of songs he was about to publish, for in these apparently minor details he was as careful and conscientious as in matters of importance. One of them, the 'Nachtlied,' written for the birthday of his friend Schleinitz on October 1, is probably his last composition. He said to Mme. Frege that it was rather a strange kind of birthday present, but that he was very fond of it, as it expressed so exactly his own state of mind, he felt so weary.

Mme. Frege sang the songs over to him several times, and then he expressed a wish to hear something from the 'Elijah'; she went to fetch a light, and when she came back found him shivering, with his hands cold and stiff and his head aching violently. He recovered sufficiently to walk home, but this was the beginning of the end. The attacks recurred with increasing violence; Paul, who had come to his sick-bed, was present at the last, on November 3, from which he never rallied, and expired on the morning of the 4th.

The whole population of Leipzig manifested the greatest sympathy during his illness, and after his death all mourned as if they had lost a beloved relative. At the funeral service in the Pauliner-Kirche at Leipzig, on November 7, Moscheles, David, Hauptmann, and Gade were the pall-bearers. The coffin was taken to the railway station in the evening, and conveyed to Berlin by night. At Köthen it was received by the Gesangverein, and at Dessau a chorus was ready to sing an Abschiedslied composed in honour of the departed by the aged Friedrich Schneider.

Felix lies by the side of his sister Fanny, in the churchyard of Holy Trinity, at Berlin.

The following description of Felix's personal appearance is contributed by Mr. G. Grove:—

'In person Mendelssohn was short,[1] not so much as five feet six inches in height, and slight of build; in figure lithe, and very light and mercurial. His look was dark and very Jewish; the face unusually mobile, and ever varying in expression, full of brightness and animation, and with a most unmistakable look of genius. His complexion was fresh, and showed a good deal of colour. His hair was black, thick, and abundant, but very fine, with a natural wave in it, and was kept back from his forehead, which was high and much developed. By the end of his life, however, it showed a good deal of gray, and he began to be bald. His mouth was unusually delicate and expressive, and had generally a pleasant smile at the corners. His whiskers were very dark, and his closely shaven chin and upper lip were blue from the strength of his beard. His teeth were beautifully white and regular; but the most striking part of his face were the large dark-brown eyes. When at rest he often lowered the eyelids, as if he were slightly short-sighted—which indeed he was; but when animated they gave an extraordinary brightness and fire to his face, and "were as expressive a pair of eyes as were ever set in a human being's head." When he was playing extempore, or was otherwise much excited, they would dilate and become nearly twice their ordinary size, the brown pupil changing to vivid black. His laugh was hearty and frequent; and when especially amused he would quite double up with laughter, and shake his hand from the wrist to emphasize his merriment. He would nod his head violently when thoroughly agreeing, so that the hair came down over his face—in fact his body was almost as expressive as his face. His hands were small,[2] with taper fingers. On the keys they behaved almost like "living and intelligent creatures, full of life and sympathy."[3] His action at the piano was as free from affectation as everything else that he did, and very interesting. At times, especially at the organ, he leant very much over the keys, as if watching for the strains

[1] He was shorter than Sterndale Bennett, who was 5 ft. 6 in.

[2] A cast of his hand can be bought.

[3] The Bishop of Limerick.

which came out of his finger tips. He sometimes swayed from side to side, but usually his whole performance was quiet and absorbed.'[1]

'Not less remarkable than his face was his manner. It is described by those who knew him as peculiarly winning and engaging; to those whom he loved, coaxing. The slight lisp or drawl which remained with him to the end made the endearing words or pet expressions which he was fond of applying to his own immediate circle all the more affectionate. But outside this immediate circle he was very fascinating, and it is probable that, devotedly as he was loved at home, few men had fewer enemies abroad. The strong admiration expressed towards him by men of such very different natures as Schumann[2] and Berlioz,[3] both of whom knew him well, shows what a depth of solid goodness there was in his attractiveness. 'His gentleness and softness,' says one of his English friends, 'had none of the bad side so often found with those qualities; nothing effeminate or morbid. There was a great deal of manliness packed into his little body.' Indeed, he had a great capacity for being angry. Anything like meanness or deceit, or unworthy conduct of any kind, roused his wrath at once. 'He had a way,' says a very old friend, 'of suddenly firing up on such occasions, and turning on his heel, in a style which was quite unmistakable,' and astonishing to those who only knew his smoother side. Towards thoughtlessness, negligence, or obstinate stupidity he was very intolerant, and under such provocation said things the sting of which must have remained for long after, and which he himself deeply regretted.[4] But these were rare instances, and as a rule his personal fascination secured him friends and kept them firm to him. And to those to whom he was really attached—outside his own family, of which we are not speaking—there could hardly be a better friend. The published letters to General von Webern, to Verkenius, Klinge-

[1] I owe the above description of Mendelssohn's looks chiefly to Mr. John C. Horsley, R.A. Few knew him better or are more qualified to describe him.

[2] Wasielewsky, 157.

[3] *Correspondence* (1879), 88; *Voyage Musical*, letter 4.

[4] He complained bitterly to the Bishop of Limerick in 1847 of his short temper at rehearsals or with his pupils.

mann, Schubring, Hiller, Moscheles, are charged with an amount of real affection rarely met with, but which never leads him to sink his own individual opinion on any point which he thought material, as may be seen in many cases. Talent and perseverance he was always ready to encourage, and the cases of Taubert, Eckert, Gade, Joachim, Rietz, Naumann, Sterndale Bennett, Hiller, and the anonymous student whose cause he pleads so earnestly to the king,[1] show how eager he always was to promote the best interests of those whom he believed to be worthy.'

But it was not only fellow-artists who could count upon his sympathy; he freely bestowed it on all without class-distinctions of any kind. Thus he eagerly interested himself in behalf of a Swiss mountain-guide, and good servants and intelligent workmen were always sure of active assistance from him. His popularity with the so-called 'common people' was remarkable. The way children hung about him, and the delight it was when he came to Berlin, the present writer can testify, at the same time recalling with grateful emotion many an instance of absorbing work laid aside, to accede to some childish request, made in the full certainty of gaining his attention.

It only remains now to sum up in few words the further history of the other persons whose lives have been traced in this book; but it is mainly a catalogue of deaths.

The first to depart this life was Cécile, Felix Mendelssohn's widow. She survived him for nearly six years, leading a retired life, partly at Berlin and partly at her native town, Frankfort, finding her sole pleasure in her promising children, and devoting her whole energies to their education. The germs of that wasting disease to which she fell a victim had probably lain dormant long before; but after Felix's death consumption made rapid progress, and she died at Frankfort on Sunday, September 25, 1853, just as it was striking noon. She is buried in the beautiful cemetery there, with its view over the glorious country to the Taunus Hills.

The Dirichlets left Berlin in the autumn of 1855, and settled at Göttingen, where he had been offered the post left

[1] Letters, 1844, ii. 325.

vacant by Gauss. Dirichlet had always entertained ultra-liberal views, and taken an active part in politics; and Rebecca fully sympathised with his opinions. They were both strongly opposed to the reactionary measures adopted in Prussia at that time, and Dirichlet's work at the university, and more especially of the Kriegsschule, was made so disagreeable to him that he gladly accepted the call to Göttingen, in order to free himself from a position which had become intolerable.

The other members of the family were sorry to see them leave Berlin, not only on account of the loss to themselves of the daily intercourse, but because they doubted whether the Dirichlets would be able to settle down comfortably in a small place after living in a large town all their lives. These fears, however, proved groundless, and their few remaining years passed in undisturbed happiness. Dirichlet found a circle of congenial colleagues, and an intellectual and appreciative audience, so that he was happy in his work, while Rebecca was surrounded with every comfort in the house and garden they had bought, and in her letters constantly expresses her satisfaction with everything. Now and then there is a little harmless pleasantry over the peculiarities of the small town, as for instance when she writes to her nephew, Sebastian Hensel: 'There is no such thing here as division of labour: from the Hofrath (the very top of the tree) down to the cobbler, everybody has his own little piece of ground, and works on it in the morning, devoting the afternoon to his duties as Hofrath or cobbler. I too shall live to hoe my own potatoes.' She soon became the centre of a pleasant society. 'The day before yesterday,' she writes to her nephew, 'we sang the "Son and Stranger" before sixty of our intimate friends. Stout Bodemeier's capital bass inspired me with the idea, and it was very successful. The concerto-pieces went so prettily, and there was such spirit and go in the whole performance that I for my part enjoyed it thoroughly. Bodemeier's Kauz was really splendid; he showed so much racy but good-natured humour, and so much musical intelligence, besides his really fine voice. The watchman's song made me shed many a tear, but nobody but you would know why. The short solos in the chorus were

sung by the two Siebold girls, who looked very pretty in the second place, and sang charmingly in the first. We wound up with supper and two "bowls of Cardinal"; and our company expressed their gratitude by eating and drinking to an enormous extent, and the professors by proposing the healths of everybody —hosts, guests, singers, and even the music. The rehearsals were the best part, it was so interesting to see how they understood the music and grew fond of it, and we became the best of friends over it. Walter, one of the students, who was to sing the mayor of the village, was evidently quite put out at the first rehearsal, by having only one note to sing; but at the second it dawned upon him, and I explained to him that this part had always made the greatest effect of all, and he did it splendidly. "Let me play the lion too" we had of course, as well as "cues and all." It was very nice, and it has made me feel quite at home having good music in the house. Yes, indeed, we are feeding these people with the crumbs from our former feasts.'

After Fanny's death Rebecca took charge of her orphan son (which was the more necessary from his father, as we mentioned before, having given up his home), and replaced his mother in what scarcely can be replaced, the self-denying maternal devotion; indeed, she never made any difference between her own children and this adopted son. Those only who were immediately about her knew what a warm loving heart was concealed under that apparently cold exterior.

In the autumn of 1858 Sebastian Hensel and his bride visited the Dirichlets at Göttingen for the last time, spending four weeks in their comfortable home. The life and soul of the party was Dirichlet's aged mother, then in her ninetieth year, but a woman of extraordinary energy and vitality. She joined in the most fatiguing mountain excursions, and was quite hurt if anybody ventured to offer her an arm in climbing, busied herself in the house and garden, and even took part in the dancing which was occasionally improvised in the evening.

When the Hensels took leave, there was no appearance foreboding sudden death to either Rebecca or Dirichlet, but he returned from a trip to Switzerland during the vacation dan-

gerously ill from disease of the heart, which had developed itself with astonishing suddenness.

Rebecca nursed him devotedly, and had the satisfaction of seeing him well on the way to recovery, when on December 1, 1858, she herself died suddenly from apoplexy, like her sister and brother. This blow made her husband so much worse that all hope of recovery was given up, and he followed her on May 5, 1859.

The wrecked life Wilhelm Hensel led after his wife's death has been already described, and also his devotion to the characteristic pursuit of the period—'politics.' Unhappily he did not live to see Germany in her greatness, but only Prussia in her littleness. With no specific object in life, he passed his time in thinking of her he had lost, and in ministering to others, and died on November 24, 1861, from injuries received in saving a child from being run over. He lies by the side of Fanny.

Paul and his wife Albertine long survived the rest of the family. Much less has been said about him in this book than about his brother and sisters, not from any failure of appreciation, but from the retiring and unobtrusive nature of his disposition. His works of charity and benevolence, done strictly in accordance with the injunction not to let the left hand know what the right hand doeth, were innumerable. In this respect he rivalled his cousin Alexander, the son of Joseph Mendelssohn, with whom he was closely connected in business, the two being for many years at the head of the banking-house bearing their name. They were liberal friends to young and struggling talent, gifted but unappreciated artists, deserving people of all ranks who had got into trouble, and all kinds of charitable institutions. Both acted upon the maxim that pecuniary assistance should be of such a nature as to set the recipient afloat again, and afford him the means of renewed independence, and anything like patchwork or inefficient help they utterly discarded. Above all, Paul acted as guardian angel to his brother's and sisters' orphan children, and as a most careful and zealous trustee of their worldly concerns. Felix's sons were received into his house, whilst the daughters remained under the care of Cécile's excellent mother, Mme. Jeanrenaud.

Rebecca's daughter also lived in his family for several years. Sebastian Hensel, too, found in him an ever-ready friend and adviser in all affairs of importance.

The great dread Paul always had of publicity makes it all the more praiseworthy in him to have been the first to publish Felix's letters, and thus lay the foundation for a correct estimation of his character. The considerable profits of the publication he devoted to charitable purposes.

Unfortunately, the family inheritance of a speedy and painless death was denied to Paul. He died after long and severe suffering, on June 21, 1874, and his wife followed him on July 17, 1879.

The words Felix wrote to Rebecca on July 7, 1847—'We have now ended a great chapter, and neither title nor beginning of the next is yet written, but God will make it all right; the right motto for the beginning and the end of all chapters'—had a still deeper significance for the family after Felix's death. Surely *the* chapter, the life of the Mendelssohn family, was at an end, for ever at an end, for with Felix and Fanny the artistic element which had pervaded everything was taken away. But for Germany too one chapter came to an end with the year 1847, and the next was headed 'Politics.'

The events of the last few years are known throughout the world, and have no place in this book. We are now a united Fatherland, high in the respect of Europe, and to this generation has been granted that highest of human destinies—to have lived in a great time. Still the descendants of the Mendelssohn family look back with melancholy emotion to the paradise of their youth, now closed for ever, and to the happiness of a time which never will—never can—return.

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